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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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r Talk *Johnson*

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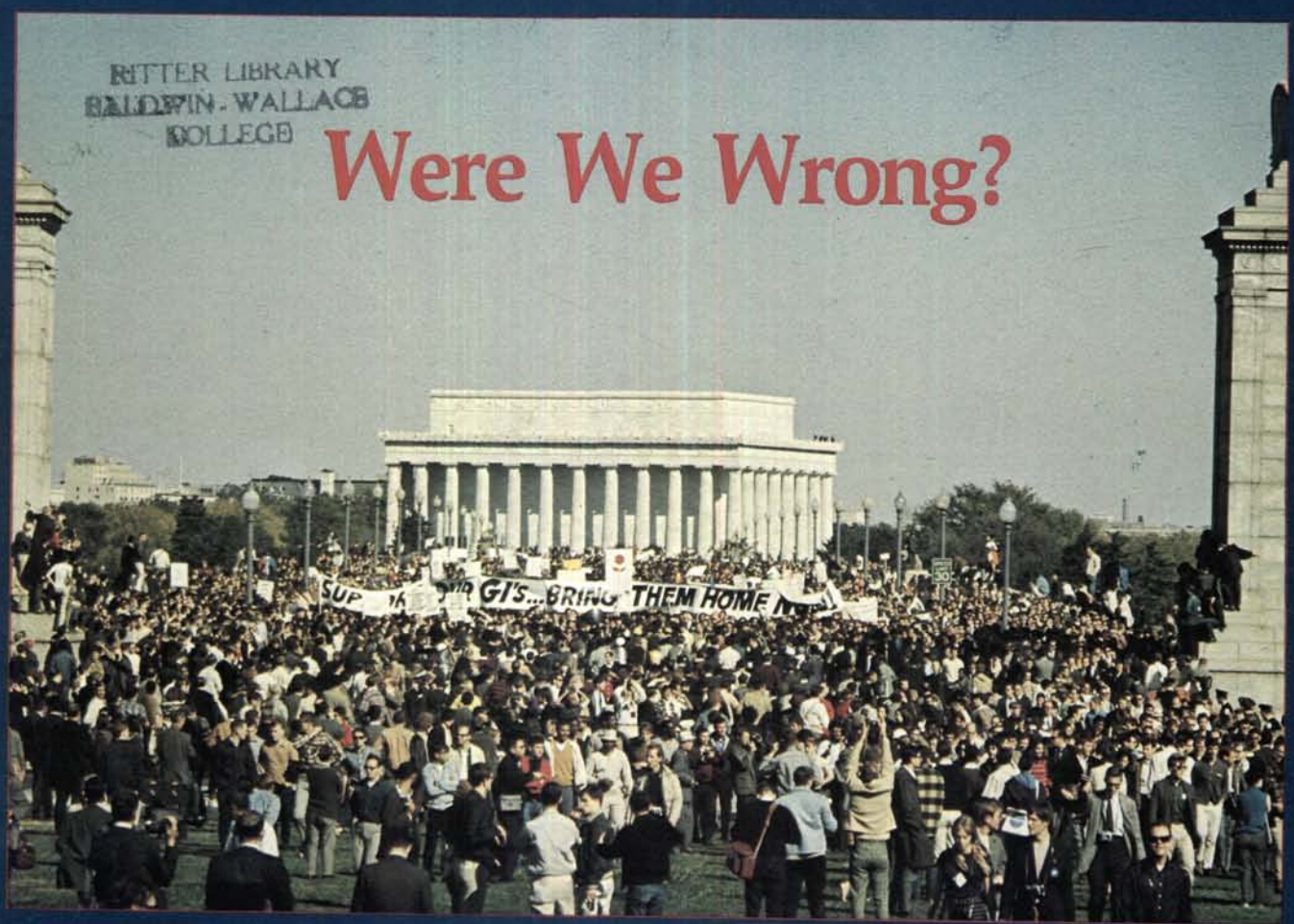

Irving Howe, Michael Walzer, Nikolai Tolstoy

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TRB

from Washington
August 18, 1979

A Lame Duck System

Boy and man, I have watched Washington 55 years. Our government has been near paralysis several times and now here we go again. Jimmy Carter is a lame duck president winged by a Gallup poll. No other country has a system like ours with its separation of powers (SOP), its king-hero-scapegoat-president, lack of plural leadership, and lack of a no-confidence escape mechanism to give somebody a mandate if there is a breakdown. Among modern parliaments our system is a Stanley Steamer.

I hope I am not extreme. There is a familiarity about some of the attacks on Carter. Lask week the sober *New York Times* carried an op-ed page article by a psychologist from Loyola University, Chicago, indicating Carter needs analysis. A later piece by Alan Drury told Carter to resign as he is "the weakest and most incompetent president since Martin Van Buren." (Memo: look up Van Buren.) Well, they said worse things of Hoover. Come to think of it, Hoover's great crash came 50 years ago, October 29. Our system left him in charge of a paralyzed government until March 3, 1933. Now our new secretary of Treasury, G. William Miller, says, "We have inherited the most distressing economic environment in 50 years." That's Hoover.

There is a mystical quality to the American presidency. The president does not share authority with a Cabinet whose members have independent political constituencies like Canada's; he does not answer questions in Parliament. All other democracies have plural executives. Yes, even Russia finds the Politburo convenient; not the United States. America hungers for a Hero. The mystical faith is that we elect a president and that God touches him in the White House, even a Coolidge. His popularity peaks as he takes the oath, hand on Bible; then the letdown. It is the revolution of falling expectations. The situation is accentuated with the new nightmare of primaries selecting minority-type candidates; with the increased aggressiveness of Congress; with the substitution for political parties of the mass-communication media polls and perpetual system of straw votes. Meanwhile the tempo of world events quickens. Now Russia has nuclear equivalence; the world's finite raw materials begin to give out; we have economic stagflation.

Carter told Congress on April 18, 1977 that the oil shortage "is the greatest challenge our country will face during our lifetime." Ho-hum. It is "simply not understood in Europe," James Reston told the *Times*, why President Carter "with a majority of his own party in both houses of Congress" cannot restrict imports of oil. America is always an enigma abroad.

Canada had an election recently; it took a month. England had an election; it took a month. America is in the midst of an election that will take two years and will culminate in November 1980. In Canada and England voter turnout was over 76 percent. Our last election brought out only 53 percent. They are boring affairs. In England Margaret Thatcher has introduced a radically different budget with advance assurance that her mandate would get it adopted. There is no such possibility here. "Under our system," says James Sundquist, "a Neville Chamberlain would stay in office for his full term even if that meant losing a war, and the very freedom of the nation."

Carter asked Congress for simple stand-by rationing authority to meet a possible oil crisis; the House killed it once, then on the second try, added amendments which Majority Leader Byrd of the Senate called "ludicrous" (exempting theaters and restaurants from thermostat control). Then everybody went home for a month's vacation.

One is awed by our nonchalance. Years ago Coolidge wrote of Congress, "It is because in their hours of timidity the Congress becomes subservient to the importunities of organized minorities that the President comes more and more to stand as the champion of the rights of the whole country." John W. Gardner, founder of Common Cause, put it in modern idiom: America is a special interest state, he said. "The sheer range and variety of interests cancel each other out and the system lies paralyzed."

Veto power lies scattered all over Washington. Special Trade Representative Robert Strauss said sotto voce the other day: "You know, I have a theory that I can defeat anything in this town! I am going to hang out a sign saying 'Robert Strauss: I can defeat anything.' This is interesting from a man who has just brilliantly achieved the trade-tariff act.

Much of the drive against Carter is escapism. With inflation roaring along we are worried about savings, insurance, and soon it will be our jobs. We have to blame somebody. Being scapegoat is part of the president's job. Things may get worse. The inflation rate is almost 14 percent; unemployment is 5.6 percent and may rise to 8.5 percent in autumn 1980. Each percentage point costs the Treasury $20 billion in relief and lost taxes. Current troubles require coordinated government action. That's hard to get in our radically decentralized political process.

It's just as serious in the foreign field. European prime ministers fall when they get a no-confidence vote; Carter gets a couple a week but stays in office. It confuses our friends. The US is a superpower leading far-flung alliances facing powerful adversaries, and its allies require predictable guarantees. Flora Lewis cabled the *Times* from Paris that concern among our allies "has increased substantially" because of our domestic events. Genrikh Trofinenko, Soviet Academy of Sciences, bluntly asks if Russia should negotiate diplomatically with the White House or Congress. Nixon negotiated a most favored-nation trade deal with Russia, he recalls, but the Senate killed it with unacceptable amendments.

The difficulty with our lame duck system is that it could bring social unrest, mobs in the streets, contempt for democracy itself. It did 50 years ago. I watched the Hoover bonus riots. Could we get a parliamentary system? Not a chance, I think. In all America's well meaning reform groups I don't know one with that audacious goal. Lyndon Johnson's special assistant George Reedy, in *The Twilight of the Presidency*, says he gave up hope of such a transition. "The more probable outcome," he says gloomily, "will be a man on horseback." Perhaps he is speaking lightly, but Reedy wasn't the whimsical kind when he was with Lyndon.

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Correspondence

Don't ask for the moon

To the editors:

Bravo for Martin Duberman and his fine review of "Homosexuality in Perspective," the latest from Masters and Johnson (*TNR*, June 16). This book could more accurately be called "Perspectives on Heterosexism." Slogging through their turgid prose, one comes across some real gems of prejudice. (Anal sex, for instance, becomes "pseudocoitus.") More disturbing is the Byzantine symmetry into which Masters and Johnson feel forced to fit their findings. The symmetry is one in which gays have short-term advantages (intra-gender empathy) and long-term disadvantages (fewer sexual options), whereas heterosexuals have short-term disadvantages (dealing with the Other) and long-term advantages (all the "perversions" plus *real* coitus.)

With their focus on organs, Masters and Johnson forget that even in a gay couple both persons are Other to each other: they inhabit two skins, not one. Their thesis is that since we can do fewer things we learn to do them better, and that the things we do sexually are done in a "my turn-your turn" sequence. Imagine the surprise of thousands of gay people reading this book! Our experience contradicts their "perspective" profoundly.

Masters and Johnson pity the poor heterosexual couple, so hemmed in and depressed by sexist norms. If only straights could learn to swing like gays! Add to that their further advantage in having "real" coitus, and there you have the moon and the stars. Gays, at the very best, can only have the moon.

Scott Tucker
Gay Media Association
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Parsons and structural-functionalism

To the editors:

Professor Jeffrey Alexander's valuable note on the late Talcott Parsons's thought ("Sociology for Liberals, *TNR*, June 2) requires correction on three points. Professor Parsons was not, as Alexander implied, the sole creator of a method of analysis known as "structural-functionalism." There was an important version of this method, quite independent of his thought, and anterior to it. It was introduced to this country by ethnologists and social anthropologists working in the British tradition—including Lévi-Strauss and Radcliffe-Brown. Moreover, Robert Merton's contributions to the method merit recognition as quite underivative of Parsons. The second point is that Parsons was not the sole American exponent of the thought of the continental sociologists Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. Durkheim was well known to American social theorists well before the young Parsons began to publish. Weber was discussed by Frank Knight, the University of Chicago economist, who in fact encouraged Parsons to work in this tradition. Moreover, Professor Alexander writes as if there were no continental emigrants in our academic life in the period after 1933. A large number of them, of many philosophical and political positions, did a great deal for the diffusion of the European tradition in social thought.

Finally, it is incorrect to attribute political criticisms of Parsons's work to the new left of the 1960s. Critiques which dealt with its conservative implications were systematically developed in the early 1950s by a number of scholars, some of them (like Lewis Coser and Ralf Dahrendorf) not likely to be confused with new left ideologues. The late C. Wright Mills, indeed one of the thinkers of the new left, published a systematic critique of Parsons in his *Sociological Imagination* in 1958, before the revival of political discussion in our universities. In any event, the most influential of postwar sociologists in the Western world was probably the late Georges Gurvitch of the Sorbonne, whose work was ignored by an American sociology that was not entirely free of provincialism.

Norman Birnbaum
Amherst College
Amherst, Massachusetts

Gasoline rationing: misplaced moralism

To the editors:

It is hard to disagree with someone as lucidly humane as Michael Walzer, but I believe his call for a moral equivalent of war—socialism—to solve our energy problems constitutes misplaced moralism ("Socialism and Self-Restraint," *TNR*, July 7 & 14).

Professor Walzer prefers gasoline rationing to allowing the market to balance supply and demand, presumably because rationing would be "fairer" than letting the price mechanism work. And, considered in the abstract, he is, of course, correct.

But aren't we obliged to take account of the evidence accumulating every day that the United States government is simply incapable of administering *any* rationing program, much less a fair and equitable one? The present gasoline supply crisis has been greatly exacerbated by the allocation policies of the Department of Energy. What they ineluctably lead to in practice is regional bias, political favoritism and widespread graft. Rationing would be the current allocation lunacies multiplied by 10 million.

Professor Walzer would presumably reply that if the rationing system were fair and were seen to be fair, the American people would suddenly grow up, stop seeking advantages over their neighbors, and accept perpetual shortages gracefully. I'm sorry, but I just don't see it happening.

If Alfred Kahn is right, then rationing may be coming our way. I submit that if it is instituted there will not be greater solidarity between citizens and a lowering of the social temperature but rather we will witness the emergence of an unrestrained and brutal market (whether legal or illegal) in ration coupons and a war of all against all to obtain scarce gasoline and diesel fuel by means fair or foul. Somehow, the chief benefit of rationing, a slight reduction in the lawful price of gasoline, does not seem to be worth the costs.

Peter Connolly
Washington, DC

Merely moribund

To the editors:

Mr. Engberg described the almost dead Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions as "mordant" ("Hutchinsland," *TNR*, July 21 & 28). The word might be better employed in his pending biography of Thorstein Veblen, as that thinker was bitingly sarcastic. I think the Center was merely moribund.

William Amlie
Boston, Massachusetts

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Comparative Financial Review

	Years ended December 31, 1978	1977
Total Income	$ 65,137,912	$ 52,823,191
Benefits and expenses	54,870,616	46,046,539
Income before income taxes and realized investment gains (losses)	10,267,296	6,776,652
Provision for income taxes		
Current	---	---
Deferred	2,792,809	1,909,150
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	7,474,487	4,867,502
Realized investment gains (losses)	(120,433)	11,364
Net income	7,354,054	4,878,866
Earnings per share		
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	4.35	2.88
Realized investment gains (losses)	(.07)	.01
Net income	4.28	2.89
Assets	$ 144,993,410	$ 116,651,027
Insurance in Force	$1,504,894,000	$1,289,000,000

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Cover: Antiwar demonstrators gather at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, October 21, 1967. United Press International photo. Articles beginning on page 15.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

August 18, 1979

Saudi Blackmail

There doesn't seem to be much doubt that President Carter promised King Khalid "noticeable progress" on the Palestinian question in return for an extra million daily barrels of Saudi oil. The oil may well have been our Independence Day present," as the King is reported to have called it. But the price of accepting the gift is far too high, in both strategic and moral terms, for America to pay. "Noticeable progress" apparently means a move toward accommodation with the PLO. The State Department denies that this is happening. Recent American behavior at the autonomy talks and elsewhere suggests otherwise.

The implications of reorienting US foreign policy at the behest of a foreign power, lest we be denied a vital resource, ought to be fairly obvious. The *New York Times* put it succinctly in its editorial last Sunday: "The Issue Blackmail." Summer gas lines are unpleasant. But surrendering to foreign demands in exchange for eliminating these lines will, over the long run, prove incomparably more unpleasant. The United States is capitulating at the moment of perceived maximum weakness. Legitimating external coercion is not a one-time proposition. Agreeing to pursue a given policy because another country wants us to, and is able to threaten us, announces that we are vulnerable to blackmail. Once the US government begins responding to foreign economic blackmail, there will be no turning back. The course we are embarked upon holds out the promise of infinite regress.

In submitting to the Saudis, there is stark tragedy—the abandonment of principle. But there is also bitter irony. For one thing, we are trapping our ostensible friend, King Khalid, in an unhappy predicament. For him, too, there is no turning back. As soon as it is clear to the PLO that the Saudis *can* exert decisive pressure on the United States, Khalid no longer will be able to throw up his hands before Arafat and plead impotence. The Saudis may not themselves be anxious to see a PLO state in the West Bank and Gaza, though for the moment they seem to feel that such a state does not have to constitute an anti-Western irridenta. But in any event, Saudi foreign policy is based on a perceived need to appease Arab hardliners and forestall internal unrest. If America had rejected the PLO-inspired demands out of hand, Khalid would have been secure in his failure. With the oil lever manifestly ineffective, the Saudi-American economic relationship would have been freed from the PLO stranglehold. And the Saudis would at least have had the option of getting off the PLO hook. Arafat would have been forced to abandon his dreams of using the oil weapon, compelled by facts to concentrate on other forms of pressure or even to stop terrorizing the resident West Bankers from winning what they can for Palestinian aspirations in the present negotiating framework. But America's willingness to be responsive to coercion places Khalid in the role of permanent blackmailer—like it or not, he is the official agent of PLO demands, anointed by Washington.

American submissiveness looks particularly sick when compared with Egypt's behavior. After all, Sadat had a far better case for allowing his impoverished nation's foreign policy to be influenced by the Saudis, Egypt's former paymaster. The United States was supposed to buttress Sadat's position by bringing the Jordanians (and the Saudis) into the peace process, thus ending his isolation. Washington's failure to produce might well have caused Sadat, under Saudi pressure, to abandon his quest for peace. It did not. The Egyptian president refused to be coerced and resolved to go it alone. The courage of this leader of an overpopulated, highly dependent third world country stands in marked contrast to America's cowardice in face of threats from the same source.

The Israelis and the Egyptians seem to do quite well when left to themselves. It is the United States that

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introduces most of the discordant notes into the negotiations. America, not Egypt, proposed that the Jerusalem question be considered immediately. America, not Egypt, proposed that the Arabs of East Jerusalem be included in the autonomy referendum constituency. America, not Egypt, offered a similar proposal concerning the Palestinian diaspora. Setting the merit of these suggestions aside (the ones regarding the referendum violate the spirit of the Camp David accords), we may well ask why it is that precisely where Egypt is standing up to the Saudis, the United States is backing down.

Most of the answer rests in the indecisive, disoriented cowardice that characterizes Jimmy Carter's foreign policy. It is not likely that the president really believes the Palestinian plight is comparable to that of southern blacks two and three decades ago. If Carter reflected on his analogy, he would realize that equating the "oppressed" requires a corollary equation—that of the oppressors. Thus the Israeli occupiers are, in effect, compared to the white racists who sought to obstruct the civil rights movement. In November 1975, when the UN General Assembly resolved that Zionism is a form of racism, our ambassador to that body proclaimed that the United States would not acknowledge, abide by, or acquiesce in "this infamous act." No doubt the president did not intend to modify that firm expression of American resolve. But the course of submission has a momentum of its own. Carter seems to have an almost romantic vision of the Middle East at peace, with all borders open and the need for military security a thing of the past. This sort of utopian fuzziness may help explain both the president's remark and the general move in the direction of the PLO.

There are flaws of character and flaws of intellect. Allowing oneself to be blackmailed is a matter of character. Drawing the PLO into the peace process is reckless. American recognition of the PLO—even if preceded by PLO acquiescence in some rewritten version of UN Resolution 242—is dangerous beyond its implications for America's international credibility. Establishing an official PLO role will solve exactly nothing. And the profound problems such a step would create will cause earlier difficulties to pale to insignificance. The administration seems to think that drawing the PLO into the peace talks will have the effect of moderating the group's stance. What will, in fact, result is that the internal political dynamic in the Palestinian movement will set a new frame of reference for the participants in the negotiations. America, Israel, and Egypt will have to acknowledge the demand for absolute sovereignty in the West Bank and Gaza as a necessary *minimum* concession, lest Arafat the "moderate" be upended by George Habash or Nayef Hawatmeh. Instead of seizing a situation as promising as any in the last 30 years, America is cleverly maneuvering itself from strength to impotence.

The operative notion in the State Department is that the granting of rights fosters responsibility. This is a admirable concept that has very little to do with th realities of Palestinian and Middle Eastern politic President Carter's apparent sense that virtually a international problems can be solved by strenuou exercises of good will is equally absurd. The impendin SALT vote in the Senate did not make this a bad time t press the issue of a United Nations force in the Sina Quite the opposite. The moment was perfect. Th administration, presumably, wanted to avoid em barrassing the Soviets by underscoring their oppositio to the peace treaty. Would it not have been better if, i light of the SALT vote, the Soviets were afraid embarrassing the US government, instead of the othe way around?

Good will, to be effective, has to be backed b resolute confidence, not by uncertain timidity ar ready submissiveness. Capitulation gives way t distorted reasoning. Thus the movement toward th PLO, dictated by the Saudis, is believed by many in th government to reflect the national interest. Abje surrender in the face of blackmail can never serv American interests. And the specific result, n suprisingly, will be antithetical to all that the Egyp Israel treaty seemed to promise. Those who believe th we can do business with the PLO may be right—but will be business on the PLO's terms. A community interest between Arafat and Carter cannot now be sa to exist. Will allowing the PLO to set new paramete for the peace negotiations create one?

James R. Kurth, a political scientist at Swarthmor told the House Energy subcommittee that we w remember this administration as one that "put th greatest power in the world and the people with th longest tradition of liberty and independence ten porarily but utterly in thrall to a few feudal monarch and absolute despots, who were essentially nothin more than a new band of Forty Thieves." There is st time to stare down the blackmailers, to insure th future generations will view our current leaders wi respect and even pride—instead of with embarrasse disdain.

White House Watch

Postscript to Crisis

There follows a mix of opinion and reports abo what's been done and said at the White House since th President told the American people that they we suffering from a "crisis of confidence" in themselve fired three and replaced five members of his Cabine and acknowledged that by these and other means h needs to restore public confidence in him.

First, a few personal opinions. It's not "over f

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immy"—not yet—as a piece in this journal's previous ssue said. He is not—not yet—"dead in the water," as I ıad a very wise and unnamed pro-Carter Democrat aying in that issue. The fact of incumbency, his ımmense powers to decide and act during the 14 nonths between now and the 1980 election, and his ıclination and ability to chop into small pieces any ther Democrat, notably Senator Kennedy, who pposes him for the Democratic nomination, make it ɔolish to write Carter off. His immediate staff is better han his silly demand for "offers of resignation" by 18 f them indicated. Four of them—Hamilton Jordan, /ho has finally been designated chief of staff; budget irector James T. McIntyre Jr.; chief lobbyist Frank Ioore; and the President's staff lawyer, Robert ipshutz, are better at their jobs than an editorial in this ɔurnal allowed.

Frank Moore's seeming defects are really Carter's efects. Given Carter's initial disinterest in and ;norance of the congressional process, no White ouse lobbyist could have done much better than loore has done. Carter recently rated Moore and his ɨbbying staff the best in the White House establish- ıent. Ambassador and old pro Robert Strauss, whose ıdgment in such matters is superior to Carter's and ɛrtainly to mine, has been saying since 1977 that Frank loore is the most maligned and underrated member of arter's senior staff. Bad-mouthing unaggressive, ild-mannered, soft-spoken Bob Lipshutz as the arter staff's weakest weakling became a habit in the 'hite House press room in 1977. It persists and ɛspected members of the President's staff share that ɔinion of him. I don't.

As for James McIntyre—I wrote here after Bert ınce had departed in disgrace in late 1977 that the ɛesident ought to stop horsing around and put lcIntyre in the budget job. McIntyre's management of .e fiscal 1980 budget process was superb. Thanks to it, arter had to settle remarkably few disputes between .e budget office and department and bureau heads. arter has just had Hamilton Jordan add McIntyre to e inner, the real, senior staff of nine or 10 assistants, distinct from the nominal "senior staff" of 18 sistants and sub-assistants. The President also has opted McIntyre's recommendation that McIntyre, ɛcretary of State Cyrus Vance, and Secretary of ɛfense Harold Brown comprise a special committee to nsider the potential budgetary effects of senators' mands that the administration increase defense ending beyond intended levels in order to win votes r ratification of the SALT II treaty. McIntyre is a ınimal budget, low-deficit man. His conservative cal views suited Carter when McIntyre was Gover- ɛr Carter's budget director in Georgia and they have bstantially affected President Carter's fiscal ilosophy. Jim McIntyre, in short, is one of Carter's tter Georgians. One of his virtues when he came to ashington as Lance's deputy was that he didn't toot his own horn. He lately has shown some inclination to do that and indeed has acquired a new press spokesman to help him do it. He better watch hisself, as they say in Georgia.

How McIntyre operates is illustrated by his unannounced part in a ridiculous flareup that resulted from one of Hamilton Jordan's first actions as the designated chief of staff. A Jordan memorandum notified all White House assistants and agency heads concerned with energy matters that Eliot Cutler, McIntyre's associate director in charge of natural resources budgeting, would hereafter coordinate the "implementation" of the President's energy programs and policies. Jordan's memorandum didn't say and was not meant to indicate that Cutler would oversee the formulation of energy policy. At the Senate hearing on Carter's nomination of Deputy Secretary of Defense Charles Duncan to succeed Secretary of Energy James R. Schlesinger, the Jordan memo surfaced. Duncan was asked whether this unknown young whippersnapper, Eliot Cutler, rather than Duncan was to determine energy policy. Duncan said he had Carter's assurance that he would lead discussion and formulation of energy policy. It was never mentioned at the hearing and was not reported that McIntyre, at Cutler's suggestion, had read the Jordan memo to both Schlesinger, then still the energy secretary, and to Duncan, before it was distributed, and they had not objected to it.

Soon after Carter met with his Cabinet and chief assistants at Camp David in April 1978 and thought he then had instituted the disciplinary Cabinet and staff reforms that he did institute in late July 1979, Mrs. Carter convinced him that she and he should have in key media executives, editors, commentators for private, informal dinners in the presidential family quarters. Her belief was that her Jimmy, the real Jimmy, would thereafter be portrayed to print and television audiences in a way he hadn't been. The idea was generally attributed to Gerald Rafshoon, the professional imagist whom she had persuaded the President to bring onto the White House staff. The dinners were her idea. The 13th of them occurred, after a suspension of several months, on Monday evening, July 30.

The guests at these dinners had mostly been network anchorites (Cronkite, Brokaw, Reynolds) and big-media news executives. The July 30 guests included an unusual proportion of working journalists: Godfrey Sperling of the *Christian Science Monitor* and his managing editor, Earl Foell; *New York Times* financial writer Leonard Silk and columnist Anthony Lewis; *Washington Post* columnist William Raspberry and cartoonist Herblock; Doonesbury cartoonist Garry Trudeau; NBC's "Today" co-anchor, Jane Pauley, and *Washington Star* editor Murray Gart. Like the preceding dinners, this one was very much Rosalynn's affair. The honor seating was from her, not the President. Herblock was

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at her right. Six of the male guests have wives and they were there. That's part of the game, of course: who would deprive his wife or her husband of dinner with the President and his wife? A complaint of working journalists since the Carters started these affairs has been that there were never any clear ground rules for the journalists—off record, on record, background for use of what was said without direct quotation, or whatever. To have stated clear rules would have been to destroy the illusion that these were social dinners for and with friends, so there were no rules. Not for eight of the nine working journalists present on July 30, that is. For one, Leonard Silk, there soon evolved a rule and the result was disastrous.

Silk had requested an interview with Carter on economic subjects and had been interviewing Carter assistants in preparation for a talk with Carter. Press Secretary Jody Powell suggested that Silk attend the July 30 dinner, and maybe have a private talk with Carter in the family quarters afterward. Powell later told Silk that too many other people would be there and the after-dinner interview wasn't such a good idea. Silk and his wife attended the dinner. Other guests noticed that Silk seemed in his questions and manner to be more the working reporter than they were. Nobody took notes, nobody recorded the discussion. It was all very private, very social, as Rosalynn intended. The next morning Powell reminded Carter of Silk's request for an interview. Carter said that at the dinner he had talked more about economics than about anything else and had said all he'd say in a private interview. Suggest to Silk, the President said, that he report what Carter had said *on economic matters* and attribute those remarks to Carter as if they had been made in an interview. Memories differ as to what followed. Powell thought that in a telephone call he limited the permission to quote Carter's remarks to economic subjects. Silk did not hear or take in that part of Powell's suggestion. There was an honest misunderstanding. Silk quoted Carter on many subjects, including the Middle East, and hell broke.

Silk, mainly interested in economics, quoted and paraphrased Carter on the Middle East at length in the last part of his report. A *Times* editor in New York inserted a passage that appeared as the third paragraph of Silk's printed report. The inserted paragraph said that "at one point" during the dinner discussion the President "likened the Palestinian cause to the civil rights movement in the United States." Silk in what he actually wrote said Carter likened "the Palestinian issue" to the US civil rights movement in the sense that Palestinians, like US minorities, wanted "just the right" to do things that they might not actually choose to do.

The dynamite phrase in the printed *Times* report was "the Palestinian cause." Silk didn't write it. Carter never said it. American Jewish and civil rights leaders and spokesmen interpreted it to be a reference to the Palestine Liberation Organization and its terrorists. Vice President Walter Mondale, speaking for Carte telephoned Jewish leaders all over the country an assured them that Carter had said and meant no suc thing. Mondale told Israeli television in an intervie staged at the White House: "The other day a story ap peared in one of our papers charging that the Presider had tried to relate the civil rights organizations of ou country with the so-called PLO organization, and tha story was totally misleading." The *Times* story, hype up though it was by the New York editor, made no suc charge.

Murray Gart of the *Washington Star* raised the Midd East issue at the July 30 dinner. He wrote in a unsigned editorial that the *Times* report "gross misrepresented" what the President had said. What th Carters and particularly Rosalynn should learn fro the episode is very simple. Put these affairs on th record or off the record, stop pretending that they a social gatherings with friends, and beyond all else mal and stick to the same rule for all the guests. Better sti stop the whole farcical business.

John Osborn

The new Republican consensus.

Henry's Revised Histor

What Arthur Vandenberg did for internationalis after World War II, what Everett McKinley Dirksen d for civil rights legislation, what Howard Baker did f the Panama Canal treaties (and might have done f SALT), Henry Kissinger now has done for the SALT agreement with the Soviet Union. He has establish the terms by which Republicans can support the treat If SALT II passes the Senate, history probably will gi Kissinger major credit (though Defense Secreta Harold Brown deserves more). If passage of SALT contributes to strategic stability between the US a the Soviet Union, Kissinger will have perform historic service indeed. And his achievement isn't ju diplomatic and strategic; it's also political. This neve elected, out-of-office memoir writer, lecturer, a part-time banking consultant, who only three years a was widely despised in his party and nearly repudiat at the Republican National Convention, has manag not only to regain favor with the GOP conservati mainstream, but to emerge as the party's foremc spokesman on foreign policy.

It's a dazzling performance, and the press, the Sena Foreign Relations Committee, and probably much the country continue to be dazzled. Kissinger ev seems to have enthralled his old adversary, Rona Reagan. The day before Kissinger's SALT testimo late last month, the two chatted for more than an ho

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on the phone, and Reagan told close aides that he didn't disagree with what Kissinger had to say. Many Republicans think that if Reagan is elected president next year, he might ask Kissinger to return as secretary of state.

How has Kissinger done it? To give the man his due, he has done it partly on brains, nerve, and dash. To tell the truth, he has also done it by deceit—by rewriting history, changing his positions, shifting blame and having numbers. He may be a genius, but he is an oily genius. He may be a charismatic Super K, but he is also the King of Chutzpah.

Kissinger's SALT testimony is filled with sleight of hand. To listen to Kissinger, this era of "grave danger to our national security and to the global equilibrium" is almost entirely the making of Democrats in Congress and the Carter and Johnson administrations. The Soviets have the power to destroy America's land-based missile force. This is "not the result of SALT," of which Kissinger, of course, is one of the fathers. It is the consequence of unilateral decisions extending over a decade and a half"—of strategic doctrines "adopted in the '60s," the "bitter domestic divisions" growing out of the Vietnam War and "the choices of the present administration."

According to Kissinger, when the US left Vietnam, the Republican administration of which he was a part planned to build major new strategic weapons systems: the B-1 bomber by 1981, the MX missile by 1983, the Trident submarine and missile by 1979, and various kinds of cruise missiles in the 1980s. These weapons would have reversed the trend toward Soviet superiority, "but every one of these programs has been canceled, delayed, or stretched out by the current administration."

Kissinger's version of history scarcely squares with the facts or with Pentagon figures. Far from trying to reverse the strategic doctrines of the Johnson administration, Kissinger and President Nixon accepted them completely. The US land-based missile force was not increased by a single launcher during eight years of Republican administration. In fact, the Nixon and Ford administrations cut back on strategic spending from the levels reached in the closing Johnson years. Johnson's last budget called for $22 billion in strategic outlays, but the Ford and Nixon administrations averaged $10 billion a year in comparable dollars. Some cuts were imposed by Congress, but most were called for in Nixon-Ford budgets. It's true, few liberals were impressed when Republican officials boasted that they were continuously cutting defense spending, but they really were—even when Vietnam costs are eliminated from the calculations.

Voices *were* raised in the administration protesting the cuts, but it's hard to recall that Henry Kissinger's was one of them. He was in a perpetual feud with Nixon's and Ford's defense secretaries, Melvin Laird and James Schlesinger. Schlesinger, particularly, wanted a big defense budget and a shift of US nuclear strategy from deterrence to an ability to win a limited war by building new counterforce weapons. Kissinger now portrays himself as having been Schlesinger's strategic soulmate, but former Pentagon officials say Kissinger was against any program that might seem provocative to the Soviets or would threaten detente, especially the B-1 and cruise missile.

Schlesinger got fired in late 1975, and the Ford administration did not begin appreciating his defense outlook until the following year. When Ford began losing Republican primaries to Ronald Reagan over the national security issue, the administration slowed Kissinger's SALT negotiations down to a halt and beefed up the defense budget. After his defeat by President Carter, Ford did prepare a heavy-spending Pentagon budget, but that was merely a political document left behind as an embarrassment to the incoming administration. Whether out of embarrassment or not, the Carter administration has reversed previous declines in strategic spending and overall defense budgets.

Kissinger also has played loose with the history of US strategic systems. Kissinger himself was against the B-1 bomber and Carter's cancellation of it was a defensible decision. Most defense experts now agree that Soviet air defense advances would have made the B-1 obsolete before it was built. In alleging that Carter shut down production of Minuteman III land-based missiles, Kissinger conveniently forgets that President Ford did the same in his fiscal 1977 budget. He started it up again in 1976, just as he was facing a hard Texas primary race against Reagan (which Reagan won two-to-one anyway). As a result, the US had 100 extra missiles without any silos to fire them from, and so Carter did indeed close down the production line again.

President Ford did call for construction of the MX missile by 1983, but it would have been a fixed missile, like Minuteman, and just as vulnerable to Soviet attack. All Pentagon documents indicate the Ford administration did not expect to be able to deploy a mobile missile until 1986. Carter administration officials say that the mobile MX plans they inherited from the Ford administration had to be entirely redrawn, which accounts for delays.

The Trident submarine program *has* been delayed, as Kissinger said, but it's mainly the result of decisions made in the Ford administration. The first bad decision was to build such a big, complicated, expensive boat in the first place. The second was to design so unwieldy a

Correction

In the last issue it was mistakenly stated that Salvador Allende was a Communist. Allende, the democratically elected president of Chile who was killed in a military coup led by the present Chilean leader, General Pinochet, was a Marxist but not a Communist party member.

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production-management system that the company building the boats couldn't perform under existing contracts. Kissinger would have the world believe that he and the Ford administration planned to go full speed ahead on cruise missiles, but the record shows Kissinger always thought of them as undesirable complications in the SALT-negotiating process, bargaining chips at best. Full appreciation of cruises as slow, cheap, and accurate strategic and theater nuclear weapons has come only during the Carter administration. Kissinger complained to the Senate that he thought it dangerous for the US to sign a SALT protocol restricting cruise missile production for three years. He called it "a unilateral renunciation of an American capability," but the negotiating record shows that Kissinger's own February 1976 SALT proposal contained just such a 3-year ban.

Kissinger's fast footwork in the SALT hearings is of a piece with his general pattern of covering his own and his Republican presidents' tracks for political purposes, while pinning the blame for America's troubles on Democrats. According to Kissinger, Carter is to blame for the fall of Iran, for US vulnerability in the Middle East, for Soviet and Cuban advances in Africa and elsewhere. But it was Kissinger and Nixon who built up the shah of Iran into a weapons-laden megalomaniac out of touch with his own people.

Yes, the US is weak. But much of our weakness is economic and much of that weakness grows out of dependency on expensive foreign oil, OPEC oil. It happens that the OPEC cartel was young and weak during Kissinger's days in power, but he did nothing to stifle its growth. In fact, the Nixon administration seems to have favored higher OPEC prices in order to build up Iran, encourage domestic production and raise oil company profits. Certainly it did nothing to induce the shah, a leading OPEC price hawk, to limit his greed.

The truth about Henry Kissinger is that he has moved to the right since leaving office. He has become a partisan Republican. He has tried to repair his position in his party, and he has succeeded. For SALT's sake, it's good that he has, even though the effort has caused some damage to his reputation as a meticulous historian. Without Kissinger, no influential Republican might have been available to serve in the Vandenberg seat for SALT. Howard Baker miscalculated where the political center of gravity lay in the SALT controversy. He seems to have thought that his presidential candidacy required him to force the Carter administration and the Soviet Union to renegotiate the treaty on his terms. He could not achieve that end and he also failed to do his homework on basic SALT facts. He was embarrassed in Senate hearings by Defense Secretary Harold Brown and had to withdraw into silence. If Kissinger had not carefully cultivated a new hawk's coat before the SALT debate, he might not have had the credibility with Republicans to endorse SALT and cause them to follow.

Now practically all of them are following. Reaga George Bush, Gerald Ford, John Connally, eve Howard Baker, are emphasizing that they never *reall* never flatly came out against SALT. They always, the now say, thought that the real issues in the SAL debate were defense preparedness, US resolve, ar reversal of Soviet expansion. They all seem unite with Kissinger, around the proposition that SALT ca be ratified if rock-solid guarantees are forthcomir that the Carter administration will spend more ar work harder to correct the strategic balance. Georg Democrat Sam Nunn and the Joint Chiefs of Staff a responsible for framing the exact terms of th conservative ultimatum delivered on the Carte administration, but Kissinger had been working c some such formulation independently. If the Carte administration has the skill to come to an agreeme with Nunn and the Republicans, SALT will survive

Whether Republican unity will survive, and wheth peace in the world will survive, are other questions. A unusual consensus prevails on foreign policy issues the Republican party these days. It exists becau Jimmy Carter is such a convenient target that Republicans are offered an unobstructed shot. I Carter's lot to sit atop a major conceptual fault line foreign policy, all within his administration. Andre Young and Young's intellectual disciples think imperative for the United States to move as fast possible to get "on the other side of history"—that away from the right-wing dictators and on the go side of the third world—or face disaster. Zbignie Brzezinski and other traditionalists think that comba ting Soviet power is still the major challenge facing th US. Carter might prefer Andy Young's ends, but he stymied by domestic and international realities. And executing policy, he is pitiful.

Except possibly Representative John Anderson Illinois, the Republican presidential candidates a Kissinger are all firmly ensconced on the traditio "this side" of history. They would have maintained t support for the shah of Iran to the bitter end. Th would have continued propping up Somoza. And th would be inclined to lift sanctions against Rhodesia. E their Carter-induced unity is deceptive. There are de rifts in the Republican party, too, between pragmati and purists. Henry Kissinger has proved again a again that he is a pragmatist first, last, and only. If believes in any principles besides the laws of survi and perpetual maneuver, they are hard to find in record. Other Republicans, who usually crowd arou front-runner Ronald Reagan, believe that forei policy is a great morality play, with forces of darkn and light constantly in battle. If Reagan were to elected and if Kissinger were to become secretary state again, the split would reappear, as it explosively in 1976 over Panama and detente.

Where might the test come? Well, suppose Marga

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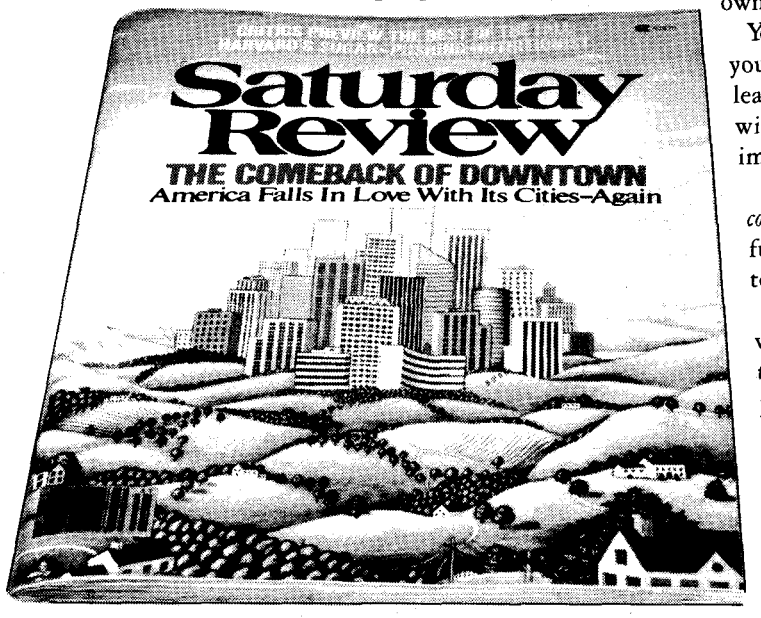

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...ier's unbelievably pragmatic settlement effort in ...desia were to fail and all-out civil war were to take ...lace. And suppose Cubans and Soviets began to appear. And suppose the Reagan-Kissinger team were in office. The Republican right would want to send US military aid and, possibly, advisers. I would like to think Kissinger would know a losing cause when he saw one, and pragmatically finesse the challenge. But his president might say, "Fight!" and Kissinger, as in Vietnam, might do it. He might tell us it was the right thing to do and we, dazzled and bewitched by that Kissinger magic, might believe.

Morton Kondracke

Democratic elders who dismiss Jerry Brown as flaky are breathing their own exhaust.

The Brown Path

If you were a fellow with the name of A. Thomas Quinn, age 35, from Los Angeles, one of the things on your mind these days would be how to get Jerry Brown the Democratic party's 1980 presidential nomination. A "Brown Exploratory Committee" has been registered at the Federal Elections Commission and Quinn heads it. That means the legalities are out of the way, and Brown could pass the word any day now that he's officially out to finish the job on Jimmy Carter he began in 1976 when he whopped the Georgian in half a dozen primaries. Then, Brown was a victim of his own bad timing. Carter already had the nomination sewed up. One of the things Tom Quinn is supposed to do for 1980 is work out some improved timing.

Quinn ran some earlier Brown campaigns. For the past five years he has served as head of California's air resources board. Before Quinn took over the board, the largest stationary-source polluter the board had cited was a hole-in-the-wall fast food stand in downtown Los Angeles called the Kosher Burrito. Quinn broadened the search to include some larger corporate polluters like Standard Oil of California. Quinn is a canny political tactician who knew the elders of the Democratic party weren't going to turn to Jerry Brown in 1976 and knows they won't in 1980. If Brown wants the nomination, he'll have to win it straight out.

Quinn's man has a few political troubles in his own backyard these days. The California legislature overrode three of his vetoes, two of them on spending, in a 10-day period, a rebuke to the governor unprecedented in modern California history. Then the California Senate rose up and threw Brown's friend Jane Fonda off the California Arts Council. This was primarily a rebuke for Brown's appointment of Edisor Miller, a former Vietnam prisoner of war who mad antiwar statements while in Hanoi's prison, to th Orange County board of supervisors. Brown reported ly appointed Miller to please Fonda and her husband Tom Hayden, whose support Brown wants for 1980 Brown shrugs off the vetoes and says of Miller, "H suffered an official rebuke and has since made substantial contribution to society. Besides, to appoin the guy the legislature wanted would have been to pla the old, corrupt land development politics of Orang County."

In the same period, Brown led and lost a fight on th University of California Board of Regents to sever th university's federal nuclear weapons research con tracts at Livermore and Los Alamos laboratories, wher all of this country's nuclear weapons research i conducted. Brown says the university system i running a money laundry for the Pentagon, and he too the side of a growing student sentiment demandin that the ties be severed. When the vote against hi proposal was announced, Brown gave his fello regents a little lecture, saying, in part:

> *This is a matter of principle and values. I've been troubled by the growth of the mega-university and its connection to the technocratic society. Can the university play the role of prophet and teacher, at the same time act as the bureaucratic silent partner to the Pentagon and still maintain a hold on the allegiance of its basic constituency? Occasionally, you know, the students are correct. On issues like HUAC, farm workers organizing, opposition to atmospheric testing, and the teach-ins over Vietnam, history has vindicated not the regents, but their critics.*

Brown's problems in California will mean little in national presidential campaign. But the image of Brow among the national political establishment will take toll, at least in the beginning. Public officials, fun raisers, opinion makers—Republicans and Democra alike—tend to see Jerry Brown as erratic and unprin cipled, a leader who follows the polls, a politician who shown serious lapses in judgment. They suspect that a a candidate, Brown might attract anti-Carter prote votes in the early primaries, but would fade whe people began to get the idea they actually were votir for *president*. For evidence to support these judgmen they cite Brown's performance on Proposition 13, th California property tax-slash initiative that passed 6. 35 percent in 1978, and his more recent call for constitutional amendment mandating a balanc federal budget, and a constitutional convention, necessary, to get it.

Take Prop. 13 first. Brown campaigned strong against the initiative, calling it a rip-off and a consum fraud. Ten days before the primary, when it becan dead certain that Prop. 13 would pass, Brown fell qui and plotted his strategy. He was, you recall, up f reelection himself in 1978, the year that eve

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candidate in America ran as a fiscal conservative. The day Prop. 13 passed, Brown's Republican opponent, Evelle Younger, trailed Brown by only one percentage point in the polls, with all the momentum running against Brown. It should also be noted that the initiative process in California carries the force of law, and since budget cycles are dictated by the state constitution, Brown and the legislature had only three weeks to implement the spending cuts necessitated by Prop. 13. Brown had a choice. He could cede the issue and probably the election to the Republicans, which would have been a political dumbstroke. Or he could do what he did, which was to clap an arm around Howard Jarvis, and say, "Howard, you were right and I was wrong. The people just voted themselves some tax cuts and I'm going to give them some spending cuts to go along with it." He grabbed the issue and he sealed the fate of Evelle Younger.

Brown admits that Prop. 13 amounted to overkill. But its stringency was the result of the legislature's failure to pass a more progressive tax relief plan he had presented to it the year before. When people are forced to short-circuit the political institutions, to take matters in their own hands, the results are predictably extreme.

Brown says the constitutional convention movement is the national equivalent of Prop. 13, a way forcibly to draw the attention of Congress to the issue of ending a growth-sapping spiral of federal budget deficits. Brown's recommendation is that the budget balancing amendment be "fairly flexibly drawn" because there are times of "serious economic slowdown that require some stimulus. When we approach the goal of 34 states needed to call a convention," Brown says, "Congress will write the amendment itself. It will never call a convention."

California assembly speaker Leo McCarthy broke sharply with Brown over the convention issue, and their split spilled over into the assembly, causing some of Brown's political problems at home. "The fact that he was prepared to take rights that have been interpreted over two centuries of court decisions and subject them to a convention review in the present climate of negativism is an indication of his attitude," says McCarthy, who supported Brown's 1976 presidential bid but not this one. The Brown side rejoins with other instances from history when applications from the states for a constitutional convention forced a recalcitrant Congress to draw amendments of its own. Between 1894 and 1902, the Senate thwarted all efforts to draw an amendment requiring direct election of senators, for example, and it wasn't until 31 states petitioned Congress for a convention on this matter that the 17th Amendment was adopted and sent to the states for ratification. In other words, Brown sees his support for a constitutional convention as a means to an end, although one that others find fraught with more danger than Brown himself does.

Brown's handlers think that some of his problems will disappear once he begins to get around the country and gets to know "the college of cardinals"—the people who represent constituencies in the Democratic party. Part of the negative conventional wisdom about Brown amounts to nothing more than the political gossip of opinion leaders, people breathing their own exhaust. That part, Brown's aides figure, will fall of its own weight once the campaign gets under way. But Brown has raised very serious questions about himself among serious people with his constitutional convention proposal, and that part may linger.

The way for Brown to topple the conventional wisdom and overcome the accumulation of negative impressions is to go out and win some primaries. As Jimmy Carter proved, this captures the attention of political professionals. Before he began to rack up primary victories, George McGovern too was regarded as a long-shot from a narrow ideological base.

But winning primaries may prove to be no easy business. If the polls can be believed, Democrats have all but chosen their 1980 nominee, provided he's willing. Senator Edward Kennedy leads Carter and Brown by margins of two to one and more in national and statewide polls from all over. The Brown forces are not deluding themselves about Kennedy's intentions. They think he's running, and it's just a matter of timing. Then, they see the race boiling down quickly to a two-man battle, with President Carter not among them. They don't underestimate Kennedy, but what can be done about him? "It'll be head to head and either we'll beat him or he'll beat us," says Quinn philosophically.

Brown has done very little to maintain contact with those who backed his whirlwind 1976 effort, and until early August, he did nothing to gear up for 1980. An aide is now on a reconnaissance trip to Florida, where a non-binding party straw poll is set for November, and to Iowa, where the real thing begins on January 21. Though the decision is still under review, Brown is likely to pass Florida as meaningless and also forgo Iowa. "All Brown could get out of Iowa is a bloody nose," says Ed Campbell, the Iowa Democratic chairman. In both states Kennedy is the overwhelming favorite and there are draft movements hard at work. Carter already has staff in the field in both and is regularly massaging party leaders.

It once was thought that Jerry Brown would be a stalking horse for Ted Kennedy, relieving Teddy of having to join the early rough and tumble and to run directly against a president of his own party. But if Brown stays out until New Hampshire, the draft-Kennedy folks will have to take on Carter alone in the first two rounds, adding enormously to the pressure on Kennedy to clarify his intentions.

The way some of the Brown folks see it, they're positioned pretty well. On the one hand, as challengers

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they can pick and choose their battlegrounds, at least in the early going, while an incumbent president has to defend everywhere. In New Hampshire, Brown hopes to pull support from two already organized but distinctly different forces in the state, the anti-nuclear movement and those who back a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. Perhaps this is what he means when Brown talks of the need for "new political categories." The first primaries are contests of perception, battles for momentum in which it matters less who wins than who does better than expected. In this respect, Kennedy has been built up as such an overwhelming favorite that he'll peak the day he actually announces and then give the impression of just hanging on. The negative images of Brown in the press and the political community have so lowered expectations about his possibilities, says longtime aide Gray Davis, "It'll be almost impossible not to exceed them."

A clue to how Brown hopes to exceed these diminished expectations can be found in his long-standing view that he represents a new political generation. "The idiom of our time is not the partisan terminology that stirred the emotions under Truman or Roosevelt or even John Kennedy," Brown told Bill Moyers. "The planet is an organizing idea, the human species, the biosphere." Brown is searching for the right words to speak to the next generation of Americans, and he may find it necessary to reformulate his rhetoric.

But he probably has the right idea. It's been 20 years since John F. Kennedy stood at the steps of the Capitol and proclaimed that the torch has been passed to a new generation. At just about that time, the demographic center of the American population (a statistical formulation that begins counting at age 12) was older than at any time in our history; five years later, as the largest bulge of the baby boom moved through, it was younger than ever before. Two decades is a political generation, the period between Teddy Roosevelt and Calvin Coolidge, between Woodrow Wilson and FDR.

No one who has witnessed the voting habits of the Depression generation that FDR forged into an incredibly durable voting bloc can doubt that political attitudes are shaped powerfully by events in the years when people are inducted into active political life. The New Deal generation, which came to political maturity during times of economic hardship, developed and carried with it a lingering economic liberalism, a confidence in the government's ability to redress wrong and a nationalism forged and ratified in a war that galvanized the national spirit.

Those who cast their first ballot in the election of 1960 or later are beginning to show the marks of quite different formative political experiences—the marks of a war that defied patriotic impulse and shattered the social fabric, the presidential and political assassinations, the civil rights and peace movements, Watergate, and the struggling anti-party politics of the late 1960s and 1970s. They are social and political—but not economic—liberals. They have no residual trust that government can be counted on to do the right thing and the first important economic adversity they have experienced is beginning right now. Voters from this political generation tend to be more affluent than the electorate as a whole and more fiscally conservative.

Jerry Brown touches some important cultural, social and political bases with this group. Indeed he was shaped by the same events that molded their world view. During the civil rights movement, he did what many northern kids his age were doing: he went south to bear witness and his presence there was called to the attention of his father by the governor of Mississippi. Brown was part of the antiwar movement and backed Gene McCarthy for president in 1968. Despite his image as a flip-flopper, there is a record of some philosophic consistency in Brown's past and a determination to convert that philosophy into public policy. As a student, he helped the farm workers organizing committee; then, as governor, he was an important force in shaping a solution to one of the most bitter labor disputes of our day. When his father, Pat Brown, was governor of California, Jerry picketed against capital punishment; as governor, he vetoed the state's capital punishment law even as the voters were registering their approval by 75 percent.

Another consistent strain in Brown's philosophic and political make-up is that he doesn't like to spend money. Leo McCarthy says, "From the start, he showed more restraint on spending than most Democrats." Brown says that doesn't mean he's fiscally conservative, just cheap. Call it what you will, this is the strain in Jerry Brown that stimulates the most mistrust among traditional liberals, particularly when it manifests itself in budget cuts for mental health, education, welfare and the like. One union president, who regards Brown as a political anathema, shouts, "What's he want to do with autistic children? Drop them off Seal Rock?"

Brown will cede the traditional liberals in the early going, especially if, as expected, Kennedy moves to an active candidacy and reassembles the old New Deal coalition for one last gasp. But Brown may indeed be able to reach a new category of voters, with his budget-cutting, fiscally conservative rhetoric, and the argument, "Remember, among the deficits we're paying off today are the ones Lyndon Johnson ran up to finance the war in Vietnam."

The latest NBC poll shows that 60 percent of all Americans don't want Jimmy Carter to run again. ABC-Lou Harris surveys show Carter leading Brown by less than 10 points. Some analysts believe that Brown is simply inheriting the strong anti-Carter feeling in the country. But the most interesting statistic in these polls is that among all voters under 50, Brown is beating Carter.

Brown is a phenomenon that the Republicans have

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been watching for some time. GOP chairman Bill Brock says "Among those who voted since 1960, those with the loosest political allegiances and the deepest skepticism about government—among these folks, Jerry Brown is gangbusters."

At 41, Jerry Brown is about to start his second campaign for the presidency, this time as an underrated political commodity. His timing may be better this round, and it's always better to begin with lowered expectations, as Jerry Brown well knows.

Ken Bode

Reconsidering the antiwar movement.

Were We Wrong About Vietnam?

by Irving Howe and Michael Walzer

No question that human beings can ask themselves is more attractive morally than, "were we wrong?"

It is a question now being insistently put to those of us who opposed the Vietnam War. The Cambodian horrors and the shameful Hanoi policy toward refugees are evidence, we are told, that we were wrong. Or at the least they provide a reason for reconsidering our views. Even if the good faith of those who put this question may sometimes be doubted, there can be little harm, perhaps some good, in looking back and reconsidering.

It is important to recall that opponents of the war did not share a common point of view. On the contrary. There were divergent, even conflicting opinions among those who attacked American intervention in the war. Perhaps the simplest, and one that with the growing bitterness in the country gained increasing support within the antiwar movement, was:

1) The victory of Hanoi and the Viet Cong was desirable because it would further the "progressive cause" (that is, communism). Or less bluntly, it was desirable because only a left-authoritarian government could be both revolutionary and ruthless enough to cope with the problems of the third world. People holding such views ranged from a cluster of old Stalinists to a large number of new leftists.

Those who gave "principled" support to Vietnamese communism were and remain consistent, if not always candid. These are people who would have supported Hanoi whether or not it spoke for a majority of the Vietnamese people, whether or not the opposing Saigon regime was democratic, whether or not the United States had a genuine national interest in Southeast Asia. They can still have no reason to change their minds (William Kunstler has not), for they never were so naive as to suppose a Viet Cong victory would bring democratic liberties to Vietnam. Nor did they particularly care. Some of them have endorsed far worse things than what Hanoi has been doing to the boat people.

Others, including some intellectuals, supported Hanoi not out of principle, for they were not Communists, but because they were swept away by sentiment and indignation. Some intellectuals journeyed to Hanoi and came back with statements of feckless admiration for its society, suggesting they did not just oppose US intervention, but felt it would be *good* if Hanoi won the war. Perhaps these people will now publicly reconsider what they said about Hanoi and the Viet Cong, as the influential French writer Jean Lacouture recently has done.

The remaining points of view in the antiwar movement differed sharply, differed in kind, from the first one, though in the heat of the antiwar struggle this may not always have been clear. A point of view that almost all opponents of the war except the most rigid ideologues shared to some extent, or resorted to on occasion, was:

2) The war was morally wrong, since American intervention constituted an effort by a great power to impose its imperial will upon a people that had long been struggling to determine its own fate. In doing so, the United States used increasingly brutal methods: mass bombings with B-52s, the destruction of peasant villages, the violation of Cambodia. Many of the people holding such opinions were not ideological at all.

There was much truth in this position, but it could not by itself provide a sufficient *analysis* of the Vietnam War. If the methods used by the United States were what troubled opponents of the war, then what would these opponents make of the methods used by the other

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rving Howe and *Michael Walzer* are editors of *Dissent*, the lemocratic socialist quarterly. Howe, the literary critic, s editor of *The Best of Sholom Aleichem* (New Republic Books). Walzer is professor of government at Harvard.

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Another View: Guilty Consciences

A generation later, current events in Southeast Asia echo in many respects the tragic predicament of war-ravaged Europe in 1945. The defeated power has vanished from the scene, leaving a triumphant communist invader squatting victorious on half the battleground, eyeing the remainder with a predatory glare. Political and racial massacres, purges, and persecutions predictably follow the cessation of fighting, resulting in casualties and suffering exceeding even those of the war itself, and likely to continue into the indefinite future. Vast multitudes are rendered homeless, and driven to wander as best they may over the face of the globe.

I described in a recent book, *The Secret Betrayal* (Scribner's), the fate of over six million Russians who, in 1945, found themselves stranded in the defeated Third Reich. Most of them were placed in Arctic death camps by the NKVD, a sizable minority having already been massacred by Soviet executioners. Over two and a quarter million of these wretched people—men, women, and children—had been presented to Stalin by Britain and America as a result of secret agreements freely entered into.

Today the situation is apparently reversed, with the Marxist Vietnamese authorities encouraging or compelling thousands of their wretched subjects to take to rickety ships and try their luck on the oceans, seeking refuge in civilized countries. Many have drowned on the way, their desperation testifying in unmistakable fashion to the horrors of what is happening at home.

It might seem at first glance as if the policies adopted by the Soviets and their Vietnamese protégés are diametrically opposed; in 1945 myriads were to be sucked back into the morass, while today bayonets are employed in driving them out. The principle is much the same, however. Governed by an ideology providing a usefully uncomplicated world model, the commissars regard these masses of humanity over whom they exert control as impersonal casualties to the immutable laws of history. Marx's dialectic, so ingeniously forged in the reading room of the British Museum, makes a chancy weapon in the hands of NKVD guards at Kolyma or Vorkuta, or those of the clinically mad (it seems) former rulers of Cambodia.

The doctrine is unchanging, the priests interpret. There is also a residue of realism. Without the 20 or 25 million slaves of Gulag, it is doubtful whether the Soviet economy could have survived that bold experiment which so impressed Jean-Paul Sartre and H. G. Wells. The motives of Stalin's present-day epigones in Vietnam are not yet fully known, though it is not difficult to guess what they are. The Chinese minority must be regarded on racial grounds as irredeemably hostile, just as Stalin feared and hated the Balts, Volga Germans, Crim Tartars, and other alien elements in his empire. If a few hundred thousand are drowned or lost, why how much the safer for the commissars now starting to savo

side? American methods undoubtedly were more destructive, partly because of our advanced military technology and the sheer firepower that we were able to employ, partly for reasons that require a political analysis of the war. But the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong were brutal enough when brutality served their purposes.

If what troubled antiwar people was the fact of American intervention in a far-off conflict, this was indeed a consideration of substance. Non-intervention is an important moral principle. But is it an absolute principle? Were these people against *all* interventions? Or only American intervention? In a world where the opponent great power, the totalitarian Soviet Union, clearly did not hesitate to intervene in the affairs of small countries, would these people support counter-interventions? Suppose the US were (improbably) to intervene on behalf of political forces they favored, say, the dissident blacks of Rhodesia, would they oppose that intervention? These questions are not easy to answer, but they persist as a heritage of certain kinds of opposition to the Vietnam War: good-hearted but not always carefully thought out. In any case, the moral argument against the Vietnam War, which it was essential to make, could only be rendered secure when tied to a political analysis.

But there were many people, especially the more realistic members of the Washington establishment, who cared little about either the moral issue or the political analysis. Coming to oppose the war somewhat tardily, they used a pragmatic argument such as:

3) Whatever the original rationale for intervening in Vietnam, it soon became clear that the costs of winning the war (to say nothing of figuring out what "winning" might mean) had become so enormous, it would be a mistake to carry the war to a triumphant conclusion even if that were possible. Had there been some crucial national interest in the Vietnam outcome as there was in Berlin, then it would make sense to continue the fighting so long as there was a reasonable hope of a victory that would serve that interest. But there was no such national interest in Vietnam, and no hope of such a victory. Through a sheer massing of military power, the US might still have achieved a result that it could call winning, but at a price—political, moral, human—so high that winning would constitute a greater disaster than not winning.

The pragmatists generally accepted that the US must show firmness in opposing communism. But even some conservatives came to recognize that Vietnam might not be the best place to show it—indeed, was probably the worst—and that the Vietnam War was draining energies that could be better applied elsewhere. The pragmatic argument was advanced primarily by people without a hint of rebelliousness, but it was used, when convenient, by many of the antiwar protesters.

There remains finally the position of many Socialists and liberals, in outline something like:

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the ideological and sybaritic delights of the unimpeded exercise of power! They must already be establishing the beginnings of the apparatus of that new class which, in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, enjoys privileges and power unknown to the old czarist and royal ruling classes.

Then again, how amusing to watch the embarrassment of neighboring states and the capitalist West. How will they reconcile their vaunted humanitarian ideals with the stupendous logistical difficulties of solving a refugee problem beyond even their resources? A problem, moreover, which can be increased at will and ad infinitum by simply turning the screw of the holy dialectic. There are millions more Vietnamese and Cambodians, foolish victims of the laws of history according to Marxian logic, who can be pushed out to sea when required. Stalin possessed a rough sense of humor, which he indulged in the form of cruel practical jokes, and there is no reason to imagine that his Oriental counterparts fall behind him in this respect.

There is another interesting comparison to be made. In 1945 the British and United States governments took elaborate precautions to ensure that the crime of forced repatriation took place under circumstances of extreme secrecy. Nor was Stalin anxious for the world to know of this episode in socialist planning. The silence of censorship prevented future generations from discovering what would have been the reaction to forced repatriation of all those western liberals and socialists who had so long and ardently espoused Stalin's cause in myriad publications, broadcasts, and smart radical coffee mornings.

Today the situation is different. The expulsion of the boat people takes place under the full glare of world attention. Reactionaries everywhere excoriate the regime that cheerfully makes war on its own citizens. But how are noble-minded liberals who worked long and hard for Ho Chi Minh to react? Support for the Viet Cong provided even Jane Fonda with a sense of purpose in her mumming life. But what if America in all those years had after all been fighting an enemy as savage as the Nazis?

No, it would be another great cruelty to deprive the peace movement of its memories, already (Jane Fonda starring) moving into the nostalgia business. A liberal conscience is a tender flower, not to be compared with the sentiments of crude Russian peasants or Vietnamese fishermen. It is, however, extremely resourceful. There are indications that already many of those who lauded the Viet Cong conquest are now elbowing their way forward to head the clamor that something be done for the victims of that conquest. Hypocrisy and cant generally know no checks on their impudence, but now if ever is surely a time for those with guilty consciences to preserve a decent reticence—if not shame.

Nikolai Tolstoy

Nikolai Tolstoy lives in England and is the author of *The Secret Betrayal*.

4) The war in Vietnam was partly an inherited colonial war, with the US taking over from France; partly a civil war between two Vietnamese camps; and partly a battleground in the worldwide conflict between the US and the Soviet Union. By about the mid-1950s it became evident that the conflict in Vietnam had taken a decisive and probably irreversible political character that precluded the Saigon government from winning mass support among the Vietnamese people, or undertaking the kind of social-political measures that might enable it to do so. The US allied itself with a series of corrupt, unpopular, and authoritarian regimes (Diem, Ky, Thieu) fighting against a communist government and a communist-led guerrilla movement which together, unfortunately, had succeeded in appropriating the historical energies of Vietnamese nationalism. It became highly unlikely, therefore, that the war could be "won"; or that "our" side could seriously be said to be fighting for freedom; or that the majority of Vietnamese supported either the Saigon government or American intervention.

This political analysis, merely sketched here, lent weight and cogency to the moral and pragmatic arguments against the war, since it helped explain why the American intruders, neither more nor less moral than other people, behaved so badly in Vietnam. If the US had been able to gain the support of the peasants in the countryside and the educated middle classes in the cities, the Americans would probably not have resorted to some of the methods that were used.

It never was necessary to defend the communist regime in Hanoi or the Viet Cong guerrillas in order to oppose American intervention. Some of us around *Dissent* hoped for the emergence of a Vietnamese "third force," capable of rallying the people in a progressive direction by enacting land reforms and defending civil liberties. In retrospect this hope of the early 1950s may seem a vain one. Vietnam had been fiercely polarized by the French colonialists who, unlike the British in India, allowed almost no freedom for the early Vietnamese nationalists. This, in turn, made it virtually certain that the liberal and socialist tendencies among these nationalists would be rendered helpless and that the better-organized, more combative Communists would be assured of domination within the nationalist movement. Communist leadership of Vietnamese nationalism was the single decisive factor of recent Vietnamese history—something probably without parallel elsewhere in the world.

Working for a bit of freedom in third world countries does not strike us as futile, even though both left authoritarian and *realpolitik* analysts join in sneering at the idea. But it is very difficult. And the policies of the United States, largely tilted toward the support of two-bit autocrats, constitute a major reason for the difficulty. Whatever small chance there may have been for a non-authoritarian solution in Vietnam was effectively destroyed by the tacit collaboration

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of all the great powers.

By the Kennedy years, perhaps earlier, it was clear the Saigon government would remain in the hands of mandarin authoritarians who could not understand the revolutionary sentiments sweeping portions of the country and who were hostile even to mild reforms. This meant the war would now settle into a struggle between a totalitarian government (Hanoi) exploiting the nationalist tradition and peasant demands, and an authoritarian government (Saigon) precariously kept in power by foreign money, arms, and troops. Even if one judged the authoritarian government to be "the lesser evil," the reality was that giving that government support meant enabling the victory of its totalitarian opponent. A dismal choice!

The US sent its troops into Vietnam to reverse the verdict of a local struggle, which meant, in turn, imposing a ghastly cost in death and suffering upon the Vietnamese. As it turned out, the US could not reverse that verdict finally; it could only delay its culmination.

The consequences of the communist victory, as some of us did suggest a decade ago, have been dreadful. Only fellow travelers and fools would deny that. But who can say what the magnitude of death and destruction would have been if we had fought our way to victory? (With atomic weapons? Had we not used every other kind?) Those who now bemoan our failure to "persist" in Vietnam ignore the fact that the US already had more than half a million men there, vast quantities of weapons, and a large fleet of giant bombers. Still we could not win. Are the partisans of persistence prepared to offer some estimate of the costs of persisting?

Those of us who opposed American intervention yet did not want a communist victory were in the difficult position of having no happy ending to offer—for the sad reason that no happy ending was possible any longer, if ever it had been. And we were in the difficult position of urging a relatively complex argument at a moment when most Americans, pro- and antiwar, wanted blinding simplicities.

Our views were largely swept aside within the antiwar movement, though there were people involved in the campaign for Eugene McCarthy and the moratorium of 1969 who shared these views at least in part. Those who prevailed, or at least those most likely to be heard above the din, were the William Kunstlers, the David Dellingers, the Tom Haydens, tacit or open supporters of Hanoi, the very people who recently refused to sign Joan Baez's statement criticizing the Hanoi government for its treatment of refugees.

None of this, to be sure, is to say the liberal and socialist wing of the antiwar movement made no mistakes; we made a lot of them. But on the basic issue we firmly believe we were right. We were right in refusing to give credence either to Saigon or Hanoi, in refusing to support the imperial backers of both. There is no reason whatever to change that conviction.

Time-Life Books is to writing what MacDonald's is to cooking.

The Post-Industrial Bookshelf

by Barbara Demick

From the start, it bore all the hallmarks of a Time, Incorporated operation. Time, Inc.'s book division was officially inaugurated in 1961 on the principle of no-risk publishing. While other conglomerates pursued the bottom line of the publishing business by splashing low bodices and blood-stained hatchets on the covers of mass-produced paperbacks, at Time they have adopted an even surer tactic. They find the customers before they make the books.

Time-Life books are painstakingly tailored to suit the tastes, moods, and buying habits of the public, with as much attention lavished upon design and packaging as in the garment and soap industries. Time-Life Books press manager Jim Coakley explains, "Planning is 90 percent of the job." Before they go ahead with a book Time-Life employees have designed the cover, determined the scope of its contents, settled on the price length, width, and number of pages, the ratio of pictures to text, the budget, and—occasionally—the author. Dummies of the book-to-be are photographed brochures are mailed out, and if enough people say they'll buy it, the book is made to order.

This method has made Time-Life Books one of the

Barbara Demick, TNR's summer intern, is a student at Yale.

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op-selling, top-grossing publishers in the world, with .5 million books sold in 1978 alone. The people at Time-.ife Books (or TLB, as the division is known within the ompany) estimate that their books—covering a gamut f topics including plumbing, wildflowers, African ooking, the city of Istanbul, World War II, and the art f Michelangelo—grace the shelves of more than 275 nillion families around the world.

What is most remarkable about these figures is that 'LB has published only 601 titles in its 18 years of perations. Because these books are expensive to pro-uce—about $300,000 before printing—each one has o sell in tremendous quantities in order to produce a rofit for the company. And almost all the books are estsellers by conventional publishing standards. But /ho has heard of *Mathematics*, a TLB single title that iscreetly made publishing history with sales of over wo million copies? These books never make the *New 'ork Times* bestseller list because they are purchased rimarily in the privacy of the home mailbox, rather nan in bookstores.

Time, Inc.'s venture into the book publishing world tarted in 1950 with *The Time-Life History of World War II*, single volume which sold 450,000 copies in its first ear entirely through mail-order ads in *Time* and *Life* nagazines. (TLB now has an entire series on World Var II.) Nick Benton, TLB's vice president for public elations, likes to tell how in the course of the next ecade, the two-bit operation in a "cardboard alley" in ne Time-Life building at Rockefeller Center became a ull-fledged publishing operation and a separate ivision by 1961. Of course this newcomer had nearly 0 years of *Time* magazine experience behind it. TLB's rst publisher, former Doubleday official Jerome lardy, predicted that Time, Inc. had a "unique pportunity to apply the techniques and concepts of nagazine journalism to the creation of books."

Time, Inc. was in an excellent position to move into ne mail-order market with its huge mailing lists from ne magazines. The current lists, which are not for ale, rent, or swap to other mass mailers, are among 'LB's most valuable resources. A computer in Chicago orts the readers by their buying habits. Customers are ategorized into art buyers, history buyers, home epair buyers, recipe buyers, and so on. Coakley says LB does no other market research. "We know nothing bout our buyers other than what they buy. We have ever done any surveys. I suspect Joan Manley [the urrent publisher] would abhor that; the integrity of ne reader must be preserved."

A Time-Life book rarely stands alone. It is usually art of a series of anywhere from six to 27 books and is enerally sold by subscription. When a buyer orders ne book, he or she automatically becomes a "sub-criber," and can expect a new Time-Life book to arrive the mailbox every two months until the end of the eries. The buyer has 10 days to decide whether to pay r the book or send it back. Of course, 10 days is ample time to read the 40,000 or so words of text in each book. But Time-Life books are not *reading* books as much as they are *owning* books.

The system works. Time-Life Books has never lost money on a series.

As the TLB promotion literature explains the economics of this unique system, "Most book publishers, backed up by independent distributors and independent bookstores, are essentially middlemen for bringing the work of independent authors to browsing shoppers. On the other hand, TIME-LIFE BOOKS is an integrated publishing house responsible for everything from conceiving a book to delivering it to the customer's home."

In 1976 TLB moved from New York to Alexandria, Virginia. Operating out of the glass-walled, plant-filled Atrium Building in Alexandria, TLB is a paradigm of efficiency in the publishing industry. All series ideas are generated from within the Atrium and staffers are queried regularly to contribute new ideas. If a series meets the marketing test of approval in advance from potential buyers, a staff of about 20 is appointed to produce it, including a series editor, four or five assistant managing editors, an art director, a chief of research, text researchers, picture researchers, and staff writers. Like the magazines *Time* and *Life*, which have separate jobs of reporter and writer, TLB maintains sharp divisions of labor. Except for the high-ranking editors and business officers, each of the 400 employees at the Atrium is allotted his or her own task in the bookmaking process, which is pursued in his or her own sparkling white office. Right now there are eight series in progress: "The Good Cook," "The Seafarer," "The Encyclopedia of Gardening," "The Great Cities," "Home Repair," "Collectibles," "World War II," and the forthcoming "Epic of Flight." Each staff member works on one to three books at a time until the series is completed, then moves on to a new series.

The key to making this intricate process work is predictability. "We are surrounded by rules," says TLB's managing editor, Jerry Korn. "It is very much like a hard-bound magazine. We follow a strict schedule controlled by the editors in a way other books are not." The editors know well in advance, sometimes years ahead, not only the scheduled dates for completion of each stage of a series, but also the exact number of pages, style, theme, and dimensions of each book, leaving little flexibility. The problem is to get their detailed conception of a book to materialize.

One flaw in the TLB formula is the problem of monitoring the literary and historical whims of freelance writers working outside the climate-controlled environment of the Atrium. Except for a few of the how-to books like home repair, all the books are farmed out to freelancers or to experts in a particular field. TLB pays its writers handsomely and expects no original research, but it is no easy task to write a Time-

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Life book. According to a TLB promotional pamphlet, the job involves "synthesizing the total knowledge of a subject and presenting it in proportions easily grasped by the lay reader." It's a challenge to tell the history of Russia, or the basics of animal behavior, in 50,000 words or less, all in that peculiar *Time* magazine idiom of the written language.

Before the text (or "script," as it's sometimes referred to at TLB) is ready for printing, every fact in it must be checked against three sources, and the copy will be read over by at least five editors to insure that it lives up to the Time-Life style. Jim Coakley describes this style as "tasteful and lively." A former TLB staffer calls it "zippy with lots of action verbs." Time-Life books often are translated directly to be sold abroad, and this creates another challenge to the teams producing history books. Any trace of historical bias, prejudicial tone, or unequal length of treatment of different aspects of a nation's history and culture must be eliminated to achieve the TLB standard of a "universal" and "durable" product. If a freelancer's work does not conform, an entire book may be rewritten by in-house editors fluent in the Time-Life lingo.

Of course, each series differs a bit. "Home Repair," now approaching 22 volumes, has been entirely written in-house, with special consultants brought in to advise on the more arcane aspects of the field. The "Foods of the World" series was written by freelancers. Some books, like the French cooking titles, were composed by experts like Julia Child and Craig Claiborne; others were put together by professional writers who knew nothing about cooking and worked closely with consultants and recipe researchers in TLB's own kitchens. In a commendable experiment to re-emphasize the text, TLB has had the "Great Cities of the World" titles written entirely in the first person. Jerry Korn says, "We wanted to get the authors to write more emotionally, like a love letter to the cities."

George Constable, editor of the World War II series, insists that there is "absolute separation of Church and State," meaning the business side from the editorial product. Neverless, TLB's guiding principle is a sincere desire to please the public. And what pleases, sells. There is one employee, Mary Jo Frere, whose entire job is to read the thousands of letters that buyers send in, to see if their suggestions and criticisms can be worked into new series and reprintings of old ones. Nick Benton says proudly, "In a very real sense our readers determine what we produce."

In 1965 TLB arrived at a simple but ingenious idea: instead of trying to guess what buyers want, why not just ask them? Since then, Time-Life has introduced the method of public opinion polling into the publishing world. Every so often, between 60,000 and 100,000 of TLB's loyal subscribers receive in the mailbox an envelope bearing in red ink the words, "Confidential Questionnaire from the Publisher." Inside it contains about six leaflets, each with a photo-dummy and description of a possible series. For example, would yo be interested in 128 pages on Mark Twain (you see lifelike photo of the book), 7⅜" wide, 10¾" long, 5 percent illustrations, the first of a 12-book series "Great Men of Literature"? Or, maybe, approximatel 200 pages on Buddhism, the lead title of the "Religion of the World" series? The pollees are asked to respon by checking off one of five boxes for each series, fro "extremely interested" to "not interested at all," and t mail back the pre-paid reply envelope.

A favorable response in one of the polls is not enoug of an assurance of success for TLB to proceed wit production. If the advance order forms for a series fa to produce enough sales, the series will be canceled The religion series and a family health book were kille at this stage, at considerable cost to TLB. The advanc order form, the hardest-core promotion piece in the lif of a series, features extravagant color pictures of cover and inside pages from the books, which are mostly sti unwritten. These are very expensive to print and mai For the World War II series, the mailing included a thre foot by two foot fold-out brochure, a letter from TL President McSweeney, a letter from a pictur researcher, and a perforated "'V' for Victory" token t stick onto the reply card if you wanted to buy.

Since readers are supposed to buy the book sequentially, it is crucial that each series "lead off" wit its best book. For the "Wild, Wild World of Animals, the photogenic lions and tigers seemed the logic choice; but when the *Jaws* mania broke lose, *Dangero Sea Creatures* took the lead. In the World War II pre-pub lication mailings, *Blitzkrieg* was featured as the starter c the series, but the buyers' sense of chronology dictate that *Prelude to War* be the first offering of th subscription in later mailings. Always flexible in thi respect, TLB can change the selling technique for an series. As the first round of subscribers, the "charte subscribers," begin to drop out from a series, th consumer base is replenished by sending out update mailings to new people.

The TLB commodity has proved to be highl exportable. Foreign revenues last year reached a high c $120 million, a record 48 percent of TLB's tot revenues. The company now maintains 500 full-tim overseas employees, working in offices in Toky London, Amsterdam, Paris, Munich, Sydney, Toront and Mexico City. TLB publishes in English, Frenc Dutch, and German. And it licenses translations in 2 other languages. TLB has done some publishin directed strictly at foreign markets, including a 1(volume "Children's Treasury of Knowledge" for th Southeast Asian market and a 97-part work in Britai called "The British Empire," produced in conjunctio with the British Broadcasting Company. But most TL sales abroad are straightforward translations c domestically produced books, with very little editori adaptation. Some of the most American-geared titl

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have been best-sellers abroad; for example, "The Cowboys" and "The Indians" have sold over 160,000 copies in Yugoslavia. The first copy of TLB's "Russian Cooking" title was given to the Soviet ambassador's wife, Mrs. Dobrynin, at a gala reception at the Soviet Embassy in Washington. TLB hopes to lead the way nto the China market.

TLB has revised its marketing tactics more than its editorial product to adapt to foreign markets. In Latin America, where the postal systems and credit ratings do not live up to our own American standards, door-to-door sales have been most effective. Telephone soliciting, door-to-door, and selling in workers' cafeterias at lunchtime have generated more than one million customers a year in Japan.

TLB is now the fourth largest book publisher in the United States, and the leading marketer of classical records. The Time, Inc. books division—which includes the traditional publisher Little, Brown, the Book-of-the-Month Club, and other properties as well as Time-Life Books—has more than doubled its revenues in the past five years, reaching a height of $361 million last year. TLB and Book-of-the-Month Club together control about 40 percent of the US mail-order book market, more than twice the share of the next-largest, Doubleday (which owns the Literary Guild and other book clubs).

TLB is hardly a pariah in the publishing world. Anthony Burgess, Carl Sagan, Elizabeth Bishop, Roger Tory Peterson, and Peter Gay, among other notable academics and writers, have been TLB authors. TLB makes no pretense of contributing to the body of scholarly knowledge. It considers itself a high-quality "popularizer." But the books are generally well-respected as being concise, accurate, educational, and—of course—pleasing to the eye.

Time-Life Goes to War!

f the first item in history to be mass-roduced was the brick, the second was oubtless the book. So Hugh Kenner uggests. Once printing began to dis-lace hand-copying in the 15th century, e says, "It grew evident almost at once hat mankind's existing stock of verbal reasures was too small to feed the new echnology. Hence instant treasures: ooks composed solely because en-repreneurs with a press and some type eeded something to print." Since then he new technology has grown steadily ore voracious, and now we have Time-ife books streaming endlessly from the achines in Alexandria, Virginia. This peration is said to constitute one of the ost profitable publishing ventures ver. It has certainly changed a great any people's notion of what a book is, s well as changing the general notion of bookstore from a place with shelves nd words to a place full of racks and ictures.

For the consumer of Time-Life books, book is something that's part of a eries," the way formerly a given issue f *Life* was only a part of the year's ccumulation. Considering their erchandising function, some of these eries titles are brilliant. One type offers allow, illogical, or misleading ways of assifying knowledge with a novel ividness: "Great Ages of Man," for xample, or "This Fabulous Century," or "The Great Cities," or "The World's Wild Places." Mindful of the dignity still attaching to the term *library* (the Morgan Library, Everyman's Library, even the Modern Library), the devisers of the series titles invoke it wherever possible, as in "The Time-Life Library of Art"—an impressive oxymoron—or "The Time-Life Library of Boating." Sometimes the word *encyclopedia* can confer similar quasi-humanistic cachet, yielding "The Time-Life Encyclopedia of Gardening." And sometimes the series title works by associating "books" (in the new sense) with harmless Saturday afternoon TV programs aimed at children. Thus "The Wild, Wild World of Animals" and "The American Wilderness."

The new "book" is also an artifact with photographs, which means that it must assume the shape of a large quarto, like a college yearbook. And as in a college yearbook, in this sort of book the photographs are always more interesting than the prose attending them. No surprise there, because this new kind of book is a thing produced by a team (rather like a brick, in fact) instead of written by an author. If you go through the latest catalog of Time-Life Books, listing 323 titles, you will discover the names of only nine authors, and these names, as if too shameful for display, are hidden in the paragraphs of ad copy describing some of the new releases. Once a book enters the backlist, the author's name vanishes entirely, and only the title remains. Authors tend to be human, which means idiosyncratic and troublesome. Their publishers often secretly wish they'd simply disappear, but this catalog is the only one I know which has achieved the Final Solution of the author problem.

On the books themselves the authors' names can't be quite extirpated, although they are banished from the spine and played down even on the title page. When an author must be revealed, he is not allowed to appear unless demeaned by an accompanying train of from two to five consultants and advisers and keepers, as if knowledge and understanding were a function of the committee system, or as if no single intelligence is to be trusted to perform a task unspied on. The idea of a single bright, responsible person writing a single bright, responsible book without the intervention of a platoon of editors, "staff writers," researchers, quality controllers, "traffic" supervisers, and similar parasites and busybodies is unthinkable here.

I base these remarks on the experience of reading for many weeks the 12 volumes of the series "World War II." Time-Life Books range from the god-awful to the quite good, and I must say

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that the books in this series, in relation to some others, are quite good. But even the best can't overcome the limitations of the picture-magazine mind and format, which determines that contemporary history be diminished to moments of vivid "human interest" and that what resists melodramatic form simply disappears. That is, these books are obliged to pretend that life is like *Life*.

This pursuit of the Higher Disneyfication is more the fault of the genre "picture book" than of the writers, all of them able and some excellent, like the British Barrie Pitt (*The Battle of the Atlantic*) or former *Life* staffer Don Moser (*China-Burma-India*) or Rafael Steinberg of *Time* (*Return to the Philippines* and *Island Fighting*). Each author contributes a popular historical narrative of about 40,000 words, digested and paraphrased from secondary sources which are accurately listed in a bibliography. These sources are well-known works of popular history or the often disingenuous memoirs of military or diplomatic figures, which the Time-Life authors tend to embrace unskeptically. An example of the method is Arthur Zich's performance in *The Rising Sun*, devoted to the pre-war expansion of Japan and the Japanese victories of 1942. He draws much material from John Toland's *The Rising Sun* (1970), itself in part a narrative compiled from prior popular histories and self-serving memoirs and self-dramatizing interviews. Here is Toland's Joseph Grew, American ambassador in Tokyo before the war:

> *Grew was a tall, courtly man with bushy black eyebrows, mustache and gray-white hair. Born in Boston's Back Bay, as was his great-grandfather, he had attended Groton and Harvard with Franklin D. Roosevelt. . . . He was particularly qualified to serve in Tokyo, since he had a rare understanding and affection for Japan and all things Japanese, as well as a wife who had previously lived in the country, spoke the language and was a descendant of Commodore Perry.*

Zich of *Time*, *Life*, and *Sports Illustrated*, paraphrases that passage and simplifies it, replacing the arcane reference to the Back Bay with a cliché and explaining to the proles what Groton is:

> *Grew was a tall and dignified man, with gray hair and startlingly black and luxuriant eyebrows. Like the proper Bostonian he was, he had gone to Groton preparatory school and Harvard College. At both institutions he had known Franklin D. Roosevelt. . . . He understood Japan remarkably well, thanks in large measure to his wife, who had grown up in Japan and knew the language perfectly.*

For any author in the series, the format is the same. His pop-historical narrative is broken up into six chapters with jazzy titles like "Yamashita's Last Stand" or "A Gamble for High Stakes." If his historical narrative should turn out to be a respectable piece of work, like Robert Wallace's in *The Italian Campaign*, the book can be redeemed for sensationalism and vulgarity by the editors' interposition of numerous "Picture Essays" with titles like "Heading 'Em Off at the Pass." (The Time-Life merchandisers conceive The Wild West and World War II as virtually the same subject, one called "Action Packed Adventure," and the catalog thus encourages the bookseller to "Put Your Windows to Work": series like "World War II and The Old West are such great sellers they could stand in a window all alone. Dressing your window with items such as 10-gallon hats, holsters, medals, and helmets guarantees this display to be a traffic-stopper.") The picture essays bear all the stigmata of the old 1940s *Life*. There are the same hectoring boldface sans-serif-cap display titles. And there are the picture captions more loyal to space than to sense, honoring an ideal of visual neatness by doggedly filling out a given measure to the end. The result is padding and adjectivitis. Here's one below a picture eight inches wide: "Before a sparse audience of curious Poles, German infantrymen led by mounted officers march in a victory parade through Warsaw's Pilsudiski Square."

The old *Life* style enters the historical narrative too. That's what all those editors and staff writers are for. If the author has neglected to supply sufficient clichés, they put in things like eating his heart out and golden opportunity and fresh as a daisy. They make sure the prose is sufficiently vivid by having the author's military bands always oom-pah and his boat engines thrum. They make sure his people vie rather than compete. They make sure there's ample sentimental personification, in the tradition of *The Little Engine That Could*. Hence "A Luxury Liner's Masterful End Run." By genteel misrepresentation and coy excision they make sure no author becomes too blue for family use. They make him write: "In training camp, the recruit . . . learned a new vocabulary: . . . 'SNAFU' for 'situation normal—all fouled up'; and 'SOS' as the acronym for the chipped-beef-and-gravy abomination that was served to him on toast at six in the morning. (The 'O' and 'S' stood for '. . . on a shingle'). They make sure the author throws in plenty of portentous-sounding bu meaningless statistics: "The so-calle May Act of 1941 . . . enabled loca communities to shut down brothels nea military installations. By 1944, some 70(municipalities had closed their red-ligh districts." Or: "Within a few weeks o the Pearl Harbor attack, six billio dollars in planes and aircraft equipmen were on order." They make sur everything gets sufficiently ex aggerated: Slim's and Stillwell's retrea through Burma was "a nightmare . . that had no parallel in military history. They make sure the author uses plent of peppy illiterate terms like mix fo mixture, proportions for size, dis interested for uninterested, and o course escalate. They make sure that n spirit of understanding, tolerance, o forgiveness be allowed to show, for th Allies are still cowboys, and the Axi powers are Indians. Thus Colone Tsuji's brilliant pamphlet issued t Japanese troops before their heroi march down the Malayan Peninsula, work which is essentially the firs survival manual for jungle fighting, i misrepresented as "A Brutal Manual fo the Invaders," when actually the bulk o it is about conserving water on th march and not eating tempting bu poisonous flora.

The 12 World War II volumes deliver history falsely dramatized and falsel cheerfulized. Thus we are told o Dunkirk: "On one pier, men fell in thre abreast under fire; as their office snapped, 'Front rank, one pace forwarc Jump!' they leaped with parade precisio onto the deck of a barge 15 feet below With the beach exploding around them Yorkshire infantrymen bellowed suc songs as 'Oh, I *do* like to be by [actuall *beside*, but let that pass] the seaside.' I the same mood, a sailor guiding troop abroad his boat mimicked a peacetim excursion tout: 'Any more,' he bawlec 'for the *Brighton Queen*?'"

These books don't just falsify the wa They falsify the conditions of real life i all times and places. But that's wha they're supposed to do, for as we kno human kind cannot bear very muc reality, nor is it the business of flourishing brickyard to deliver any.

Paul Fussel

Contributing editor *Paul Fussell* ha written many books all by himself, mos recently *The Great War and Modern Memo* (Oxford).

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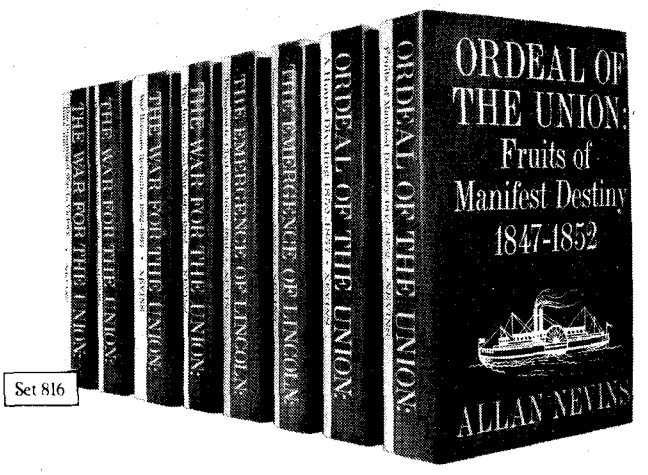

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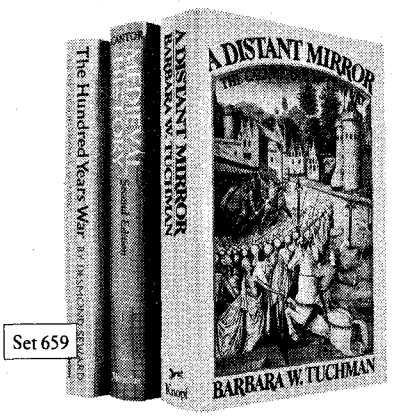

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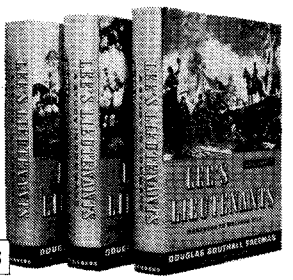

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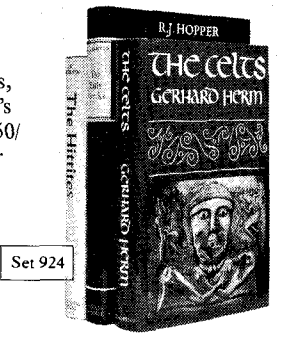

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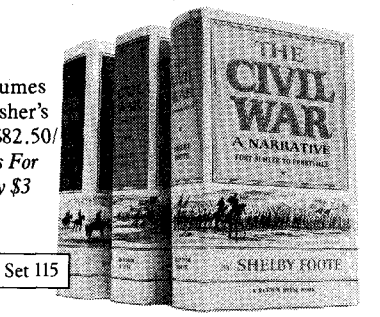

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Scripts and Nondescripts

Breaking Away (20th Century-Fox). Steve Tesich has found his level. That's less of a crack than a sigh of relief. I've suffered through three of his plays at the American Place in New York, all of them simultaneously empty and oppressive, written in a style that can be called Pampered Adolescent—writing that probably impressed his high school teachers. Now Tesich has *faced* adolescence and has written a screenplay about it with affectionate humor. *Breaking Away* deals with town-and-gown rivalries in Bloomington, Indiana, where Tesich went to Indiana University: it's built around the tensions between the students and the local kids who can't or won't go to IU. Every character in the script, every attitude, every strophe is recognizable. Basically they're all the materials of Andy Hardy and of Fred-Silverman-knows-how-many TV series. But if *Breaking Away* is sitcom in excelsis, at least it's excelsis. The script doesn't smell of writer-teams of overweight men and menopausal women knowingly giving the kids what they'll like. It sounds authentic and fresh, which is to say the dialogue combines the diction of the vernacular with smart fabrication of gags. (A man has had a heart attack and must drink decaffeinated coffee; he refers to it as "that goddam see-through coffee.")

Like *The In-Laws*, it's primarily the script that makes the picture entertaining, but like *The In-Laws*, the performances help. Dennis Christopher, the adolescent who fantasizes himself out of Indiana into Italy, plays for conviction, not for laughs, so we laugh. His parents, one of them quietly suffering (Barbara Barrie), the other just suffering (Paul Dooley), are tritely conceived, but Tesich's insistence that it's all true and the actors' collaboration keep their scenes amusing.

Besides the scraps between the IU students and the townies (who are called "cutters" presumably because stonecutting is a local industry), the other big plot element is bike racing, and there's one nicely nasty sequence in which some visiting Italian professionals ream the guileless amateur Christopher.

All of the film is well tapped along by the director Peter Yates, who last year bungled further one of Tesich's bunglings at the American Place. Yates, best known for *Bullitt*, keeps this picture brisk and "located."

Rich Kids (UA). It has two fine actresses, Kathryn Walker and Roberta Maxwell, and one great actress, Irene Worth. And everyone else in the cast is good, including Trini Alvarado and Jeremy Levy, the 12-year-olds in the leading roles. The film is decently directed by Robert M. Young, who seems especially close and empathic with his actors, especially the young ones. Then why is the picture sluggish? The script.

It's by Judith Ross, and though the dialogue is adequate in the current luxe New York chit-chat frank-but-superficial vein, the theme and intent are terribly tired: divorce, past and to come, as refracted through two children who are involved. And all the characters are stock.

That's true in *Breaking Away*, but there's a difference. Tesich's Bloomington people are like American *commedia dell'arte* figures, reinvigorated. The put-upon Indiana father is Edgar Kennedy and Carroll O'Connor and a lot of others distilled: the role is part of the American cultural landscape, and Tesich is almost saying that its triteness is its truth. But Ross acts as if she's breaking new ground, rejecting old-time "movie" characterization and dialogue, while in fact she's just skating on the thin but already well-skated ice of *Diary of a Mad Housewife*, *An Unmarried Woman*, even (without the jokes) *Annie Hall* and *Manhattan*. The effect is like picking up a two-month-old copy of *New York* magazine.

It's worsened too because of the use of the children—the writer's use, not the two actors themselves—so soon after the unbearable teenage daughter in *An Unmarried Woman* and the even less bearable *A Little Romance*. A couple of years ago, apparently, the planners of films decided that the idea of children, wandering hand in hand through the forest of the new candor, was "in."

It's worsened further because the marital rift between the principal pair is, seemingly, healed by their anguish during an escapade of their daughter's. It's like the end of an Edwardian play in which a wee one in her nightdress takes Daddy's hand and Mummy's hand and claps them together in her own hands for the final curtain. Except that *Rich Kids* is in smart talk.

In her one sequence, Irene Worth is oddly lighted. She sits next to her daughter Kathryn Walker (who does look like her daughter), Walker in mellow light, Worth seemingly covered with gray silk. John Lithgow, who has a humorous face, has a good durable quality as Walker's husband; David Selby, as her lover-lawyer, does much with little. Paul Dooley of *Breaking Away* is a stepfather here and is more gaggy than in the other film.

The executive producer was Robert Altman. *Rich Kids* shows neither his virtues (technical dazzle) nor his defects (self-bedazzlement).

North Dallas Forty (Paramount). The first few moments of a film, like the first few sentences of a novel, are often a tip-off

Films Worth Seeing

Escape from Alcatraz. Lean and taciturn as the star, Clint Eastwood. Less violence than most of his films, but tense action.

The In-Laws. Farce about a dentist and a shady operator. Funny script, well performed by Alan Arkin and Peter Falk, lumpily directed.

The Muppet Movie. If you like the Muppets (I do), that's all you need to know. Your children will explain the difficult parts.

Peppermint Soda. Parisian adolescent girl, 1963, discovering what all adolescents discover. But Diane Kurys's first film is deftly made and acted.

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to the quality of the rest. If the makers chose those few moments as the first for you to see, hoping to interest you, to set a tonality and an intent, then those moments are an index of their powers of choice. Not always but often.

It's true here. The first shot is good and so is most of the picture. That first shot shows Nick Nolte asleep—in the morning—crumpled and almost unrecognizable. His pillow is streaked with blood: he has had a nosebleed during the night. At once, the picture had me. I knew beforehand (as everyone who sees it will know) that it's about pro football. This shot promised that it was going to be about the nits-and-grits of a player's life, that the story was going to involve the aging of an athlete, that (because of the lighting) the treatment would probably be comic rather than brutal exposé, that the director understood the responsibilities of an opening shot and had fulfilled them skillfully.

All this was clear in the first 10 seconds. There were some patent lapses thereafter, but by and large the picture lived up to this implicit promise.

The screenplay is by Frank Yablans, the producer, Ted Kotcheff, the director, and Peter Gent, who wrote the novel on which it was based. The title refers to a team called the North Dallas Bulls, but there's very little actual football play in the film; of the big championship game in Chicago at the end, we see only two minutes. (And they are shot in what is called "limbo." The crowd around the edge of the field is visible, everything else is black—no stadium can be seen.) All the rest is locker room, practice, business office, and the players' social life, frequently wild. Much of what the film has to "say"—as in the recent *Semi-tough*, to which it has a few other resemblances—comes from the settings themselves, designed by Alfred Sweeney and Art Parker.

The picture had two personal jolts for me. I expected little from Nolte, on the basis of *The Deep* and *Who'll Stop the Rain?* in which he had all the charm of a beef in a butcher's fridge. But this part, an aching (football) back, brings out qualities in him of taciturn humor and skeptical feeling. The other surprise is the director, Kotcheff. I've watched his work for 15 years, in a variety of things including a London theater musical and a ragbag of undistinguished pictures, and I got no sense of deftness or style, just a hob-nailed gravity. His first show of litheness in *Fun with Dick and Jane* was quickly smothered by *Someone Is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe*. Now, in this film about a heavy sport, Kotcheff shows grace. With the help of his editors, he keeps a lively tempo going. On his own, surely, he frames shots well, moves the camera well, and does that difficult maneuver—he dollies in often for heightening, for selection, without ostentation or distraction.

If only the script had omitted the moralizing. Some of it is intentional caricature, like a monsignor praying among the players in the locker room before the big game. Much of it is straight. This seems to be the curse of most sports pictures: they have to *tell* you that the game is really life in little and that, despite the salary hustle, there's more to it at last than just winning. When *North Dallas Forty* sticks to its story, Nolte's aging and his career shocks and his women and his troubles with the owner's brother, when it sticks to its atmosphere, a raunchy world of giant men who slam one another's bodies for money and who slam into women just about as delicately, it's strong.

It's worse than their handwriting.

Doctor Talk

by Diane Johnson

In Africa or the Amazon, the witch doctor on your case has a magic language to say his spells in. You listen, trembling, full of hope and dread and mystification; and presently you feel better or die, depending on how things come out. In England and America too, until recent times, doctors talked a magic language, usually Latin, and its mystery was part of your cure. But modern doctors are rather in the situation of modern priests; having lost their magic languages, they run the risk of losing the magic powers too.

For us, this means that the doctor may lose his ability to heal us by our faith; and doctors, sensing powerlessness, have been casting about for new languages in which to conceal the nature of our afflictions and the ingredients of cures. They have devised two main dialects, but neither seems quite to serve for every purpose—this is a time of transition and trial for them, marked by various strategies, of which the well-known illegible handwriting on your prescription is but one. For doctors themselves seem to have lost faith too, in themselves and in the old mysteries and arts. They have been taught to think of themselves as scientists, and so it is first of all to the language of science that they turn, to control and confuse us.

Most of the time scientific language can do this perfectly. We are terrified, of course, to learn that we have "prolapse of the mitral valve"—we promise to take our medicine and stay on our diet, even though these words describe a usually innocuous finding in the investigation of an innocent heart murmur. Or we can be lulled into a false sense of security when the doctor avoids a scientific term: "you have a little spot on your lung"—even when what he puts on the chart is "probable bronchogenic carcinoma."

With patients, doctors can use either scientific or vernacular speech but with each other they speak Science, a strange argot of Latin terms, new words, and acronyms, that yearly becomes further

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Diane Johnson is the author, most recently, of *Lying Low* (Knopf). This essay is adapted from a paper written for *The State of the Language* edited by Leonard Michaels and Christopher Ricks, to be published in January 1980. Reprinted by permission of the University of California Press.

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removed from everyday speech and is sometimes comprised almost entirely of numbers and letters: "His PO2 is 45; PCO2, 40; and pH, 7.4." Sometimes it is made up of peculiar verbs or main dialects, but neither seems quite to serve for every purpose—"Well, we've bronched him, tubed him, bagged him, cathed him, and PEEPed him," the intern tells the attending physician. ("We have explored his airways with a bronchoscope, inserted an endotrachial tube, provided assisted ventilation with a resuscitation bag, positioned a catheter in his bladder to monitor his urinary output, and used positive end-expiratory pressure to improve oxygenation.") Even when discussing things that can be expressed in ordinary words, doctors will prefer to say "he had a pneumonectomy" to saying "he had a lung removed."

One physician remembers being systematically instructed, during the 1950s, in scientific-sounding euphemisms to be used in the presence of patients. If a party of interns were examining an alcoholic patient, the wondering victim might hear them say that he was "suffering from hyperingestation of ethynol." In front of a cancer victim they would discuss his "mitosis." But in recent years such discussions are not conducted in front of the patient at all, because, since Sputnik, lay understanding of scientific language has itself increased so greatly that widespread ignorance cannot be assumed.

Space exploration has had its influence, especially on the *sound* of medical language. A CAT-scanner (computerized automated tomography), de rigueur in an up-to-date diagnostic unit, might be something to look at the surface of Mars with. The resonance of physical, rather than biological, science has doubtless been fostered by doctors themselves, who, mindful of the extent to which their science is really luck and art, would like to sound astronomically precise, calculable, and exact, even if they cannot be so.

Acronyms and abbreviations play the same part in medical language that they do in other walks of modern life: we might be irritated to read on our chart that "this SOB patient complained of DOE five days PTA." (It means "this Short of Breath patient complained of Dyspnea On Exertion five days Prior To Admission.") To translate certain syllables, the doctor must have yet more esoteric knowledge. Doctor A, reading Dr. B's note that a patient has TTP, must know whether Doctor B is a hemotologist or a chest specialist in order to know whether the patient has thrombotic thrombocytopoenic purpura, or traumatic tension pneumothorax. That pert little word *ID* means identification to us, but Intradermal to the dermatologist, Inside Diameter to the physiologist, Infective Dose to the bacteriologist; it can stand for our inner self, it can mean *idem*, (the same), or it can signify a kind of rash.

But sometimes doctors must speak vernacular English, and this is apparently difficult for them. People are always being told to discuss their problems with their doctors, which, considering the general inability of doctors to reply except in a given number of reliable phrases, must be some of the worst advice ever given. Most people, trying to talk to the doctor—trying to pry or to wrest meaning from his evasive remarks ("I'd say you're coming along just fine")—have been maddened by the vague and slightly inconsequential nature of statements which, meaning everything to you, ought in themselves to have meaning but do not, are noncommittal or unengaged, have a slightly rote or rehearsed quality, or sometimes a slight inappropriateness in the context ("It's nothing to worry about really"). This is the doctor's alternative dialect, phrases so general and bland as to communicate virtually nothing.

This dialect originates from the emotional situation of the doctor. In the way passers-by avert their eyes from the drunk in the gutter or the village idiot, so the doctor must avoid the personality, the individuality, any involvement with the destiny, of his patients. He must not let himself think and feel with them. This shows in the habit doctors have of calling patients by the names of their diseases: "put the pancreatitis in the other ward and bring the chronic lunger in here." In order to retain objective professional judgment, the doctor has long since learned to withdraw his emotions from the plight of the patient and has replaced his own ability to imagine them and empathize with them with a formula language—the social lie and the understatement—usually delivered with the odd jocularity common to all gloomy professions.

"Well, Mrs. Jones, Henry is pretty sick. We're going to run a couple of tests, have a look at that pump of his." ("Henry is in shock. We're taking him to the Radiology Department to put a catheter in his aorta and inject contrast material. If he has what I think he has, he has a forty-two percent chance of surviving."

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We might note an apparent difference of style in English and American doctors, with the English inclined to drollery in such situations. One woman I know reported that her London gynecologist said to her, of her hysterectomy, "We're taking out the cradle, but we're leaving in the playpen!" Americans on the other hand often affect tough talk: "Henry is sick as hell."

The doctor's *we*, by the way, is of special interest. Medical pronouns are used in special ways that ensure that the doctor is never out alone on any limb. The referents are cleverly vague. The statement "we see a lot of that" designates him as a member of a knowledgeable elite, "we doctors"; while "how are we today?" means you, or him and you, if he is trying to pass himself off as a sympathetic alter ego. Rarely does he stand up as an *I*. Rarely does he even permit his name to stand alone as Smith, but affixes syllables before and after—the powerful abbreviation *Dr.* itself, which can be found even on his golf bags or skis; or the letters *M.D.* after, or on rare occasions the two buttressing his name from both sides like bookends: "Dr. Smart Smith, M.D."; in England a little train of other letters may trail behind: *F.R.C.P.* In America another fashionable suffix has been observed recently: *Inc.* Dr. Smart Smith, M.D., Inc. This stands for Incorporated, and indicates that the doctor has made himself into a corporation, to minimize his income taxes. A matrix of economic terms already evident in the vocabulary of some doctors is expected to become more pervasive as time goes on.

We may complain of how the doctor talks to us; doctors will say, on the other hand, that it is we who do not listen. Very likely this is true. Our ears thunder with hope and dread. We cannot hear the doctor. He says "bone marrow test," we think he says "bow and arrow test." We have all been struck with disbelief, listening to an account by a friend or family member of his trip to the doctor; the doctor cannot possibly have said it was okay to go on smoking, that she doesn't need to lose weight, that he must never eat carrots. This is the case. According to doctors, patients hear themselves. The patient says, "I can't even look at a carrot," and then imagines the doctor has interdicted them. Doctors' sense of our inability to understand things may increase their tendency to talk in simple terms to us, or not to speak at all. Nonetheless, we all hear them talking, saying things they say they never say.

Merchants of Grain
by Dan Morgan

(Viking Press; $14.95)

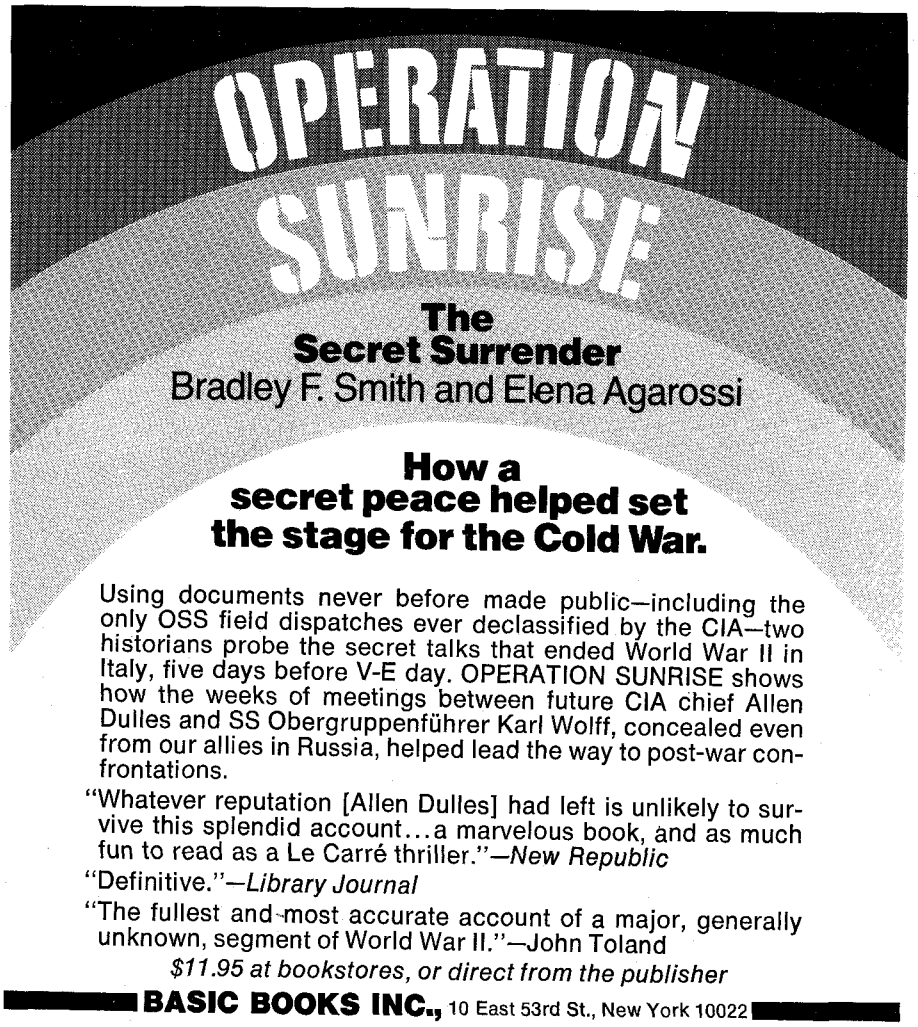
If Americans were cannibals, there might be some excuse for the way we deal with Russians: fattening them before we eat them. Or at least one might be excused for thinking that's what we are up to. After all, we periodically sell Russians our grain at a terribly inflationary cost to the American consumer, even while the Pentagon spends hundreds of billions of dollars each year with only one objective: to slaughter the Russians when the convenient time comes.

But of course we really don't intend to eat the Russians after the next war; if nothing else, the pork and beef lobbies would prevent our doing it. So why do we feed them? Because, as Dan Morgan's *Merchants of Grain* shows with embarrassing clarity, our farm power has been whored away. (That is my conclusion from Morgan's evidence; he, however, is much too restrained to draw such a conclusion himself.)

What a tragedy. The one thing this country knows more about than any other country in the world is how to grow food. Here is an awesome weapon, Morgan says. "In agriculture, there is only one superpower. Iowa raises one-tenth of all the corn on the planet, and Kansas and South Dakota produce more wheat than all of Australia."

For most of the postwar era, we indeed thought of this food as a weapon. We used it to strengthen friendly nations and we withheld it from Russia in the hope that hunger would make that malevolent government less capable of doing mischief.

But in 1972 the whoring began. With the collusion of the Nixon and Ford administrations, the grain trade was reopened with Russia. US wheat farmers rolled in dough as a result of it, but the price of wheat soared so uncontrollably that "nearly $54 billion was added to the food bills of Americans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between 1972 and 1975, the most rapid increase in a century. . . . In the single year 1973, Americans paid almost $2 billion more out of their pockets for food as a *direct* result of the Soviet purchases the previous year." We have never recovered from those traumatic costs.

This notorious "grain robbery" was the turning point in our international food policy. Since then, profit has ruled ideology. The unsettling aroma that emanates from so many of the government actions Morgan reports in this book is the smell of appeasement.

When Ford was asked in 1976 if he contemplated a grain embargo against Russia in retaliation for Moscow's involvement in the Angolan civil war, he replied, "There is not the slightest doubt that if we tried to use grain as leverage, the Soviets could get along without American grain and ignore our views." To be sure, they could have gotten by without our grain; but they could not have lived comfortably. For that, they must have US grain; Morgan tells us Russia must "rely on enormous quantities of imported grain—quantities so large that only America could satisfy the needs. . . ."

It isn't that our government is using food as a diplomatic weapon; quite the contrary. As Morgan points out, it has used food aid (or the threat of turning off food aid) to force South Korea to reduce textile exports and to force Bangladesh to stop sending jute to Cuba. Most effectively, it cut off wheat to Chile and by doing so helped bring down Allende.

One may wonder why our government uses its trade cannon on such gnats but now refuses to fire at our real enemy. Chile could never have hurt us. But Russia and OPEC hurt us every day. Nevertheless, we still sell them great quantities of wheat. We will sell Russia at least 15 million bushels this year—a year in which Russia has had a miserable crop and needs our wheat desperately. It's 1972 all over again. Not only does Russia need the wheat for her own people but for her satellites. Poland also has had a lousy wheat crop. When Poles get hungry, they riot. They have rioted before and they would riot again, but Russia will use our wheat to help keep them under control. Is that what we want? I should have thought the dearest thing to our government's heart would be to force Russians to chew on shoe leather for nourishment and to thoroughly destabilize every country within the Russian orbit. If that isn't our objective, then the Pentagon's budget must be simply an exercise in spending.

What evil influences are behind the prostitution of our international food policy? Well, aside from greedy wheat farmers who will reap 40 percent profits from their crops this year by selling to Russia (see "Wheat at $4: Squeezing Food Costs," *New York Times*, June 24, 1979) and aside from the politicians and USDA bureaucrats who will apparently perform any kind of perverse act for agribusiness, there are the great multinational grain companies. Their profiles are the core of this book. Equivalent to the "Seven Sisters" of oil are these five grain companies: Cargill, Continental Grain Company, André, Louis Dreyfus, and Bunge. A couple of them claim US headquarters (Cargill in Minneapolis, Continental in New York City) but in fact they pay allegiance to no country. They are the globe's true mercenaries, and the ruthlessness and secrecy with which they pursue their riches is pretty frightening.

Consider their hold on the world market:

> *Cargill and Continental together handle half of all grain exported from the United States—and the United States exports half of all the grain in world trade. The Big Five handle 90 percent of the Common Market's trade in wheat and corn; 90 percent of Canada's barley exports; 80 percent of Argentina's wheat exports; and 90 percent of Australia's sorghum exports. . . .*

They escape close supervision by such government watchdogs as the SEC by simply minding their own business. "Cargill and Continental probably rank as the two largest privately held companies in the United States, and Bunge may be one of the largest in the world." The Big Five, says Morgan, are run by seven families;

> *members of these families not only own most of the stock of the companies, but also serve as board chairmen, presidents, and chief executives at each of them. It is as if the Rockefeller family were still in absolute, day-to-day control of Exxon, or the Carnegies still dictated every major decision of U.S. Steel.*

Senator Frank Church, after a frustrating encounter, said this of the grain multinationals: "No one knows how they operate, what their profits are, what they pay in taxes and what effect they have on our foreign policy—or much of anything else about them." Church's Multinational Corporations Subcommittee tried to find out. It failed. Morgan has done better because, unlike the US Senate, he has not tried to use bluff where hard work was needed. His research is impressive, his writing lucid and though he generally failed to penetrate grain's secrecy (as he concedes), he must be given much credit for coming up with even these highly impressionistic profiles of the Big Five.

He does a fine job of portraying the movement of food in the world, and its effect on whole nations. If that sounds dull, I've given you the wrong impression. There's as much high adventure and low morals in this commerce. There is, for example, fascinating stuff here about how the US government, through

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The world, whose dog we are and try to be—
Among the slights shrugged off, its blithe assumption
We don't perceive any of them—says, Speak.
If only tugs and growls could do the trick;
Leaping and barking, a fellow gets hoarse, called down,
Left panting in a heap of blank fatigue.
Still, the keenest sense instinctively *knows*.
(All choked up with feelings, I blurt this out
And hope it takes. Flashing a silver-nicked license,
I settle back with one ear pricked at Wait.)

And you, best friend, who rest it has to be
In love at my feet, your fate just natural law,
Always fetch whatever ball I toss—
What inside task so golden as retrieval?
But no one thinks the whole pack will come running
To play the fable's part of fellow traveler;
The steady, loyal pet; a little spoiled,
Maybe, but nothing like a wolf. Here sport,
My lap! Put out your mitt, Old Man, and shake.
From eye to eye, another gust of soul.

Alfred Corn

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the "humanitarian" P.L. 480 food air program, helped turn some developing nations, such as Zaire, into wheat junkies. And then, after these countries quit raising their natural cereals and were totally hooked on wheat, the big grain companies, operating in the classic routine of drug dealers, took over the trade and squeezed every penny they could from their new victims. They're still doing it.

Speaking of P.L. 480, Morgan reminds us that the subsidies of this program made the Big Five fat and sassy back in the days when they couldn't have done nearly so well on their own. "In 1959, a particularly bleak year for the grain trade, four out of five dollars' worth of wheat exports and nine out of ten dollars' worth of soybean oil exports were so financed."

In return for helping them in the lean years, the Big Five are robbing us through the fat. One might suppose that in the course of preparing this book Morgan would have worked up an intense, even if controlled, dislike for these profiteers. I don't find evidence of such a reaction. In fact, he seems quite tolerant of the lot of them.

But I suspect that if Morgan were writing the book today, he would come out with some spunkier ideas on how we could escape from the multinationals and how we could with good effect return to using our food as a weapon. In some of his recent writings in the *Washington Post*, where he is a reporter, here seems to be a change of heart.

For example, in *Merchants of Grain* he discounts the idea that we could use wheat as an effective retaliatory weapon against OPEC, or at least he describes without criticism the policymaking in Washington that turned down the idea.

In the aftermath of the oil embargo against the United States, the possibility of a counter-embargo of grain against the Arabs was discussed at the Treasury and State departments—and rejected. So was a modified embargo that would have imposed export tax on OPEC-bound grain. Neither idea stood up to careful analysis. Most major oil-producing countries, such as Saudi Arabia, were sparsely populated and could easily fulfill their small grain requirements elsewhere. Iran, potentially more vulnerable because of its large population, was of course an important market—half a billion dollars a year—for American farm commodities. The farm lobby in Congress had no desire to see his market abandoned on behalf of gasoline users in big cities. 'We freeze, they starve' was a threatening phrase heard in Washington, but the realities of politics and economics caused the talk of counterembargoes to fade away.

But today Morgan apparently sees the "realities" quite differently. Writing in the July 8, 1979 *Washington Post*, under a headline that tells his new mood—"Using U.S. Wheat Against OPEC: Not as Farfetched as You Think"—Morgan flatly states that OPEC's wheat imports are growing faster than those of any other group of nations and that the potential for leverage is obvious. OPEC, he argues, can *only* turn to us for the quantity it needs—we already supply half the wheat it consumes. His change of judgment is quite startling. For the *Post* he writes,

Contrary to the popular image, OPEC is not a collection of desert nations with only a handful of people to feed. OPEC's 13 members include the world's fifth most populous country (Indonesia), the largest in Africa (Nigeria), and a populous tropical nation whose climate is not well suited to growing wheat (Venezuela). Wheat, eaten as bread or couscous, is a staple in Algeria, Libya, Iran, Iraq and Saudia Arabia. But only three OPEC countries—Algeria, Iran and Iraq—grow wheat on a large scale, and none is self-sufficient except when their crops are unusually bountiful.

He also sings a different tune these days about the merits of marketing our wheat through the government. In *Merchants of Grain*, he talks of the "indispensable" role played by the multinationals. He says no nation has ever found a better way to do the job of marketing. He cites OPEC as an example of governments that realize they can't do without the "genius" of private corporations in peddling resources.

But since he wrote those things, events have shown just how wrong he is. We now see OPEC nations beginning to peddle their oil very successfully, on a government-to-government basis, with more national customers standing in line every day.

Morgan is apparently now willing to acknowledge his error, for in the same *Post* article mentioned above he says we should give serious consideration to the proposal (made by Democratic Representative Jim Weaver of Oregon and supported by 53 co-sponsors) to nationalize wheat sales. Now he sees it as a perfectly normal suggestion ("not unprecedented"), reminding us, and himself, that "The government controlled the grain trade in both world wars. It required licensing of grain sales to communist countries until 1971. . . . " It's too bad Morgan didn't stick more of that muscle into the book, which, as it stands, is too couth, too placid, to have the great impact that its craftsmanship and scholarship deserve.

Robert Sherrill

Robert Sherrill is the White House correspondent for the *Nation*.

Disturbing the Universe by Freeman Dyson

(Harper & Row; $12.95)

Freeman Dyson prefaces his book with a story about the physicists Leo Szilard and Hans Bethe. After confiding to his friend that he was planning to keep a diary, Szilard added the reassurance, "I don't intend to publish it; I am merely going to record the facts for the information of God." "Don't you think God knows the facts?" Bethe asked. "Yes," said Szilard. "He knows the facts, but He does not know *this version of the facts.*" In the same spirit Dyson has drawn up an apology for his life, the work of a man in his middle years, 55 to be precise. It is a passionate testament, one of the most remarkable self-portraits of a scientist that I have ever read. For whom was it composed? Perhaps for a God or a Mind in whom he has greater faith than did Szilard. But the book is also written for his contemporaries, the non-scientists who will be called upon to make crucial decisions about the governance of science.

These are not true confessions in the false Rousseauian manner. Intimate details from Dyson's loves are conspicuously absent. Regular letters to his parents in England, covering a period of over 30 years, have been preserved, and

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he draws upon them to check his memory; but the text is not uncensored. He is more open in revealing the literary symbols and myths that have haunted or sustained him through the years. The image of a Deliverer and a Destroyer in a fantasy by Edith Nesbit, *The Magic City*, which he read as a boy of eight, alerted him to the ambiguities of technology; *The Ascent of F6*, a play by Auden and Isherwood he saw in London in 1937, set him on the search for the personal vision of the Demon in himself and in the brilliant scientific adventurers with whom he had cast his lot; Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* became a morality play that awakened him to the terrors of biological manipulation, though he would have to overcome his fears to say yea to recombinant DNA experimentation which, in his thought at least, he would carry much further than might be allowable on planet earth as it is now organized. That some of us will "shit on the morning star" he learned from the poet Robinson Jeffers. But more poignant is his recollection of his mother's account of Faust's redemption through work with his fellow men in a common endeavor; it may not be an accurate rendering of Goethe's text but it became Dyson's credo. The title of the book is derived from lines in T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*: "Do I dare / Disturb the universe?" In a section on "Points Beyond" Dyson dares, and the book turns into a great scientist's dream-world, in which waking fantasies, night dreams, scientific hypotheses, and "thought experiments" merge into one another.

Dyson's heroes are a strange group of men: Frank Thompson, an English Communist dropped behind enemy lines in World War II, whom he idolized at Winchester, the public school he attended: the brave one in the traditional mold whom Dyson cannot, alas, imitate; John von Neumann, the genius who towers over other scientific discoverers; Feynman, the instinctive one among the physicists roughly his age; and finally, Edward Teller, for all his bad press in right-thinking circles. Dyson understands the complexities of Oppenheimer, but cannot love him.

Though this book is meant primarily for non-scientists, to acquaint them with how a scientist looks at the world, one does not have to read far to realize that this is the witness, not of a scientist representing his class, but of a unique kind of scientist, a man endowed with literary skill, with a rare capacity for humor and for introspection, with a sensitive understanding of the language of the humanist. His rich fantasy life is freely communicated in actual dreams, narrated with beautiful simplicity, that may reveal the deepest fonts of his being. Imaginative ventures into the possibilities of exploring and colonizing the universe are interspersed with vignettes of the major physicists of our time, demonstrating once again the truth of the Pascalian reflection that only the great can truly appreciate their peers.

Disturbing the Universe guides us through the valley of death—the first four decades of mankind's possession of nuclear power and the first two decades in which a capacity for mechanical alteration of biological life through the

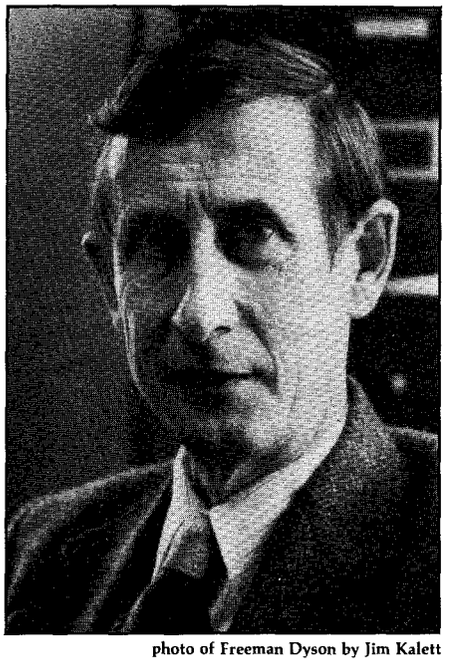

photo of Freeman Dyson by Jim Kalett

even more awesome power of manipulating the genetic code has become a reality of the human condition, for good or for evil. In many ways this is a tragic book, the history of our recent failures. But it ends with an avowal of faith that is a paean of praise to the Creator, a gloria in the spirit of the 17th-century religious founders of modern science. The argument from design will not convince the agnostic that God exists even when it is supported by mathematical reflections, but no one can remain unmoved by Dyson's delightful account of his dream of an appointment with God, his quest for the throne, and his final discovery of a little baby in the heavenly seat.

With a Baconian passion Dyson refuses to conceive of science as primarily luciferous. Unless it is fructiferous he doubts its worth. His science is of the world: he is the genius mathematician who can argue through the night with an intuitive physicist, but he values the engineer and the experimental astronomer as much as he does the pure theoretician.

Still, there are devils in this book—two above all, bureaucracy and bigness. From the searing months of World War II when the 20-year-old scientist working for the British Bomber Command bumped up against an obtuse military bureaucracy, through the years when he watched American strategic planners committed to offensive weaponry and the doctrine of mutual deterrence as the only solution to national defense in the atomic age, Dyson's villains have been the deaf and the blind who run the vast machines, men trapped by their own pig-headed professionalism.

Dyson arrived at Cornell from England in 1947 to study with Hans Bethe during the halcyon days of post-Los Alamos physics, and he remained in the United States to become professor of physics at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He was of the scientific generation that followed the makers of the bomb, and he has had to establish himself in the shadow of one of the most brilliant assemblages of scientific genius ever to work together on a common enterprise—Oppenheimer, Szilard, Fermi, Rabi, Teller, Bethe. They were generally 15 to 20 years his senior. He had not known the original sin of the bomb, but he had inherited it.

He has a marvelous capacity for defining his role in the scientific generation in which he has grown up; for example, he is aware that he disappointed Oppenheimer, who named him to the Institute, by not becoming a "deep thinker." Oppenheimer had perhaps imagined that he was coopting a young Bohr or a young Einstein. "If he had asked my advice at that time," Dyson reports with utter candor,

> *I would have told him, Dick Feynman is your man, I am not. I was, and have always remained, a problem solver rather than a creator of ideas. I cannot, as Bohr and Feynman did, sit for years with my whole mind concentrated upon one deep question. I am interested in too many different things. When I came to Oppenheimer asking for guidance, he said, 'Follow your own destiny.' I did so, and the results did not altogether please him. I followed my destiny into pure mathematics, into nuclear engineering, into space technology and astronomy, solving problems that he rightly considered remote from the mainstream of physics.*

The man's curiosity is boundless. Dyson is the only physical scientist who

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appears regularly at the joint sessions of the Institute where members of the School of History and the School of Social Science present their work plans and results.

He is not as worshipful as most scientists of the hierarchical supremacy of a general theory. And this may be related to other aspects of his view of the world. In language rich in analogy and metaphor, sometimes dogmatic, often prophetic or pre-Socratic, he establishes a forthright value system. Since the fundamental creative process in nature is for him diversification, he is constantly in quest of circumstances that will prevent man from falling into the rut of sameness in theory or in practice. Large structures, great bureaucracies, gigantic cultural units all present the danger of stultification, of reduction to uniformities and identities—ultimately of death. Though he never mentions Toynbee, Dyson too is always in search of creative minorities. The fantasy of space-colonization—which for him and his friend Gerard O'Neill is a scientific concept that is bound to become a reality (as it was for young Desmond Bernal and Tsiolkovsky)—is in the main-current of existence because it will allow for human renewal and diversification in millions of asteroids and comets. Planet earth seems to be moving toward the establishment of universal orders, which will inhibit new creation. Dyson is interested in the exploration of outer space not as a supplement for earth's deficiencies but as the ordained continuation of the underlying processes of existence, though he is not free from the fear that tragic human stupidity and folly may destroy us in the interim.

At one point Dyson raises one of the crucial practical questions of our society, viewed in short terms, of course: what went wrong with nuclear power? Having worked with Edward Teller and Frederic de Hoffmann on the Triga project (that produced a small, safe reactor for limited uses) in a little red schoolhouse, the structure became for Dyson the symbol of the excitement and inventiveness that could be generated by a limited number of scientists and engineers working together, "having fun." Instead, when nuclear power was prematurely taken over in mammoth enterprises, the adventurers and experimenters were driven out by the accountants and managers who settled for a few large types of reactors and, in the process, banished the joys of new discovery. Without this euphoria, Dyson contends persuasively throughout his book, fruit-bearing science quickly reaches a dead end. There must be a constant interplay of theory and practice in science and technology or both become desiccated, and human beings must serve as agents in the synthesis.

If only nuclear power for civilian uses had been experimented with in a large variety of small-scale projects, Dyson insists, the dangers of this new energy might have been minimized. Optimal forms would have emerged, as they do in nature, and others would have been freely discarded since the investment was limited. Instead gigantic nuclear plants were tied to electrical systems; there were few variations in the models available; and these had not been sufficiently tested before they were frozen into place. The moral of the scientist's homily is plain: never allow yourself to be locked into one position. Only in diversity is there salvation and life.

The Apollo projects were as wasteful as the original German V-2 missiles which were their spiritual forebears. A multiplicity of smaller attempts would have yielded far greater results at less cost. We seem to have been driven into self-destructive gigantism. Werner von Braun's project was born with the curse of bigness stamped upon its brow. By now, Dyson feels, the commitment has been too great for any turning back. While the carefully limited Orion project of which he was a member had to be stopped because of atomic fallout, he holds by the spirit of this relatively small enterprise. Without diversification in experiments, the pall of sameness descends upon a human endeavor and there is no room for men like him and Edward Teller.

Much as he respects the natural way of cultural diversity, Dyson realizes that as long as the elementary brotherhood of man is not recognized on earth, sharpening the differences among groups is far too great a risk today. But ultimate destiny does not lie along the path of unification. The greening of the galaxy, the peopling of the universe with beings whose isolation will generate new types—that is the destiny of Mind, of which man on planet earth is only a transient form.

Let those who live by hindsight attack the great scientists for their failure to control more effectively the forces they brought into the world. Many of them were arrogant, vain, obstinate men; but few were insensitive to the moral dimensions of their situation. They had lost their innocence. Dyson is conscious of the tragic dilemmas of the modern scientist; he is not overwhelmed by them, nor is he given to facile optimism. He neither spits on his own past, nor does he rewrite it. He is a pilgrim, a sort of Cosmoxenus, driven to seek a human way amid the absurdities of a civilization that has achieved the power physically to manipulate man and his universe, but seems intent upon destroying itself, and is approaching the brink.

Dyson is quite capable of totally repudiating a public position he once assumed—in particular, his noted *Foreign Affairs* article of April 1960, "The Future Development of Nuclear Weapons," in which, along with Edward Teller, he came out against the nuclear test ban. His position was "wrong technically, wrong militarily, wrong politically and wrong morally." We can admire his forthrightness, without quite warming to the retrospective explanation that his earlier stance was "in some sense" an act of psychological atonement for leaving the Teller weapons laboratory that was trying to design fission-free weapons and returning to Oppenheimer in Princeton. As literary psychology this may pass, as profound self-analysis and

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understanding of his feelings and obligations toward Teller and Oppenheimer it leaves much to be desired. There is need for a deeper comprehension of his relationship to these two men who stood over him as admired, and in diverse degrees respected, seniors.

Dyson's comments on Teller's testimony against Oppenheimer before the Atomic Energy Commission remain difficult to assimilate. In some respects this is the most incisive human analysis I know of the Teller-Oppenheimer confrontation, but for all Dyson's subtle explanations and understanding it is hard to accept his exoneration of Teller: "A careful reading of his testimony at the trial shows that he intended no personal betrayal. He wanted only to destroy Oppenheimer's political power, not to damage Oppenheimer personally." Teller at the piano playing Bach's Prelude No. 8 in E flat minor the way Dyson's father, a composer and conductor, had performed it—"like a chorus of mourning from the depths, as if the spirits in the underworld were dancing to a slow pavane"—leads to the strange psychological conclusion that "no matter what the judgment of history upon this man might be, I had no cause to consider him my enemy." Is he saying that a man who can play Bach with such feeling cannot be all bad?

Throughout the book there runs a haunting theme of guilt and redemption—it is introduced early, is dropped, and then from time to time reappears. During World War II in the Operational Research Section of the Bomber Command Headquarters, he was engaged in a statistical study to determine whether there was any correlation between a crew's experience and the chance of its returning alive from a mission. His data demonstrated the opposite of the official presumption that there was a positive correlation. Experience did not matter and casualties were increasing, the data showed, because of German "upward-firing guns" and a blind spot beneath the British bomber. When nobody in power would listen, a personal nightmare was born for this young man, not in uniform, counting the dying heroes. In a recurrent dream he saw an airplane crash and burst into flames. He stood there in terror unable to lift his feet as he watched the people inside the airplane burning. For a quarter of a century he lived with the fear and self-hate of the dream. In 1969, during the time of troubles in American universities, a package-bomb was opened by the caretaker of the faculty club at Santa Barbara where Dyson was staying. When it exploded he acted out his dream: he stood riveted to the floor and then had to live with the feeling that perhaps he might have saved the man suffering from mortal burns had he responded promptly. "I discovered then that I am, after all, a coward."

The dream did not reappear, but it was only in 1975 that he was finally redeemed by his son George, a builder of boats in Vancouver, who rescued two men at sea while Dyson was visiting him. A certain wholeness was restored. Freeman Dyson has a dream of cruising around the universe with his son George in a two-seater spaceship.

It is the expansion of the universe that we are witnessing. . . . For a long time we watch the galaxies speeding away into the distance, growing smaller and fainter and finally disappearing. We are left alone, silent in our little ship, with nothing around us but infinite blackness. . . .

Other physicists have had similar dreams. In one of his theological manuscripts Newton describes the free movement throughout the universe of children of the resurrection—himself among them—holding converse with one another. How many different meanings flying high may have.

Frank E. Manuel

Frank E. Manuel is Viola and Alfred Hart University Professor at Brandeis. His *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, written in collaboration with Fritzie P. Manuel, will be published this fall by Harvard University Press.

The Last Chance Energy Book by Owen Phillips

(Johns Hopkins University Press; $9.95)

The Politics of Energy by Barry Commoner

(Knopf; $10, $4.95 paper)

Energy Future edited by Robert Stobaugh & Daniel Yergin

(Random House; $12.95)

These authors share a common vision, and it is a bleak one, shaded by many of the doomsday clouds that have hung about the Carter administration the last two years. In this vision the United States appears as the moral leader of the world, but a crippled leader, paralyzed by the greatest dilemma it has faced since World War II. All three books describe the US as following a self-destructive course in energy policy, one that, left uncorrected, will end in violent economic and political disruptions, a depression, trade wars, perhaps even a shooting war.

As grim as this may sound, it can hardly be unfamiliar to those who have followed the energy debate since 1973. Those who still doubt the existence of an oil shortage should take a look at Owen Phillips's book, the easiest to read and the only one that does not push a party line. Phillips has written what is essentially a primer designed to convey the enormity of the problem, and he succeeds. He is a professor of science and engineering at Johns Hopkins, with special interest in oceanography, which may explain why he devotes so much space to a deep-ocean electricity generating device, a far-off scheme known as OTEC. The thrust of his message is not esoteric, however: "Write to your congressman! Tell him or her that you expect him to take a long hard look at the problem for our own and our children's sakes. . . . Give them hell."

All the authors agree that only radical

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change will avert the coming crisis. The tinkering done since the Arab oil embargo has produced some pleasing symbols, but not much of substance. We now have an unenforced 55-mile-an-hour speed limit, a leisurely schedule for making American cars more efficient, some tax breaks for home insulation and solar heaters and a plethora of expert studies. But the deep economic causes of the crisis have hardly been touched. The dependence on foreign oil—particularly Saudi oil—grows worse each year, pushing the US into a crisis faster than the government has been willing to pull us out.

According to Stobaugh, the percentage of imported oil used in the US grew from about 19 percent in 1960 to 47 percent this year. He points out that the US relies on a "family business"—Saudi Arabia—to keep oil flowing smoothly and prices rising at a less-than-calamitous rate. This is a fragile arrangement for two reasons. The Saudi royal family could be toppled overnight, as the shah of Iran was, and replaced with a government less friendly to the US. On the other hand, even if the Saudis continue to play the moderates among the price-gougers, Saudi oil fields within five years could reach the limit of production capacity—forcing sudden price leaps or fuel rationing. Even without a calamity of this kind, Stobaugh writes, dependence on foreign oil drains wealth from the US economy, deflates the dollar, weakens international trade, and forces the Japanese and Europeans to become bitter competitors with the US for energy supplies.

Few would challenge the accuracy of this sketch. Where people part company is in choosing the kind of radical action to be taken. After vetoing presidential schemes for six years, Congress decided this summer that it was imperative to rush into action a plan of its own: a massive federal subsidy of synthetic fuel factories. The idea, essentially no different from schemes proposed by Richard Nixon and Jerry Ford in 1974 and 1975, must be terribly bewitching, for no sooner had Congress made its choice known than Jimmy Carter abandoned his own more careful policy and joined the crowd. He too insists—with great moral fervor—that we must lend federal muscle and money to synthetic fuel plants. This synfuel fever appeared at midyear, after a gasoline shortage swept across the country. In Washington, where the shortage was especially severe, the effect was stunning. It was as though a galvanic jolt had shot through the old corpse of Project Independence, Nixon's subsidy plan, and set it striding through the halls of Congress once again.

If the Stobaugh-Yergin analysis or the Commoner vision is correct, this panicky rush to invest billions of dollars in a new generation of heavy oil and gas industries is a mistake so serious that it may delay the one program they think can lead us to a long-term solution of the energy crisis. Their radical choice is to give large subsidies for conservation, solar power and other inexhaustible (but non-nuclear) sources of energy. The government is unlikely to give enough support to this progressive approach, they fear, if it has already sunk all its available cash in propping up the fossil-fuel and nuclear systems. Here some distinctions must be made among the authors.

Commoner stakes out an absolutist position. Those who believe in solar power, he argues, cannot afford to accept any half-measures from the government; their campaign for clean energy requires that they kill off the nuclear and coal industries, a tactic which also makes them mortal enemies of big oil. We are approaching a transcendental moment, Commoner believes, something akin to the promulgation of the Emancipation Proclamation: "The solar transition offers the nation a momentous opportunity, which like the decision to abolish slavery, can rebuild the faltering economy. . . . Society as whole must be involved, for the solar transition is a great historic passage which only the people of the United States can decide to undertake." The oil companies are the slave masters, you see.

Commoner works on the assumption that only two sources of inexhaustible energy offer themselves to harried policymakers: 1) the nuclear breeder reactor, which produces its own fuel (along with noxious wastes and bomb material), or 2) solar power, which includes wood, wind, gasohol, and other renewable resources such as garbage. The breeder must be thrown out, because it requires the construction of a "huge electrical transmission network and the adaptation of all energy-using tasks to this single source." The solar system demands (according to this unique version) the creation of a huge pipeline network to transport methane and hydrogen made from grain and wastes. "The cost of either system would be so great that the nation simply could not afford to build both of them.

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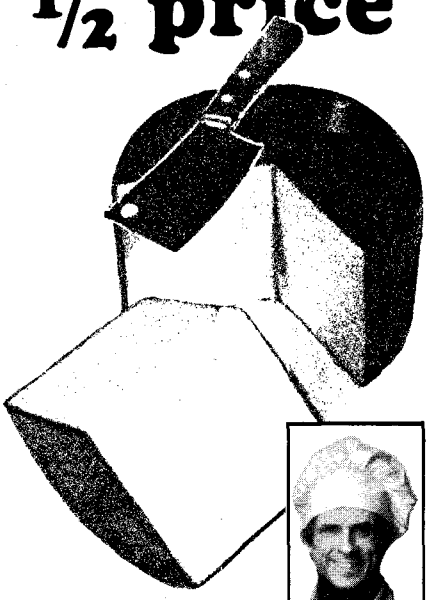

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We can take one route or the other, not both." Choosing solar power means dumping the breeder, controlling oil prices, forgetting about coal and bankrupting the electric utilities. It is nothing less than a proposal for a total coup by the solarists.

It is impossible for an earthbound mortal to guess whether Commoner's insight is near or far from the truth—precisely because it is visionary. There is little to justify his assertion that centralized electric systems and solar power are mutually exclusive. It is not clear, for example, why the gradual introduction of solar technologies might not relieve the pressing demand for fossil fuels, slow inflation and indefinitely prolong the life of the coal- and oil-powered electric generating stations. But by focusing on cataclysms due to occur 25 years or more from now, Commoner builds an impenetrable defense against such criticism.

Stobaugh, Yergin, *et al.* are more judicious solar boosters, as befits members of the energy project of the Harvard Business School. Their prose is clear and direct, if heavily laden with technical detail. This is not a book for someone with only a casual interest in energy.

These authors do not seek to have solar power unseat the fossil industries in one bold coup, but to reach an easy accommodation with them. As Stobaugh puts it: "US energy policy should give alternative sources of energy, including conservation, an 'equal chance' with the social cost of imported oil." The assumed social cost adds something to the market price, bringing the total cost to something like $35 a barrel today. In Stobaugh's terms, this translates into the need for a "fair chance" tax credit of 40 percent for industrial investment in conservation. For home buyers, the Harvard group recommends tax credits for conservation and solar investments amounting to 50 to 60 percent.

Subsidies such as these, Stobaugh argues, could prevent oil imports from rising above the present level (about 9 million barrels a day) through the late 1980s. A "conventional" energy plan like the one proposed by Carter, he believes, would allow 14 million barrels of imports a day. An important point to note: the Stobaugh-Yergin plan leans heavily on other energy sources in addition to conservation and solar. It allows for a doubling of nuclear generated power by the late 1980s, a 50 percent increase in the consumption of coal, and an increase in natural gas imports.

It is a peaceable scheme, the authors say: "Our proposal . . . would help to bridge the gap between contending parties in the bitter American energy debate." In this respect they differ from Commoner. They believe market incentives, and not regulation, should be used to create new technologies, and so they argue that fossil fuel prices ought to be decontrolled gradually. They would even extend limited support to synthetic fuel plants. But the fossil fuel industry, they believe, cannot produce the quantities of energy needed to satisfy future demand. Breaking up the oil companies will not produce more oil either. Natural gas supplies are dwindling and cannot be counted on, they claim. Coal may be useful in the long run, but not in time to stave off the immediate oil shortage. The railroads are not equipped to carry the quantities of coal we would need, and even if they were, no satisfactory solution has been found yet for the problems of air and atmospheric pollution caused by coal burning. Nuclear power, the one remaining hope, is dismissed as politically problematic and economically unsound.

After eliminating all these "conventional" forms of energy, the authors arrive at the only two which they regard with any hope: conservation and solar power. The prediction for solar—that it can supply 20 percent of the nation's energy by the year 2000, a tripling of the present six percent—seems excessively optimistic. It is reminiscent of the technician's dream of the 1950s, which had nuclear plants scattered across the country providing electricity so cheap there would be no meters. As with that departed vision, the solar estimate is tinged with the enthusiasm of the estimators. But if solar power is given the lavish subsidies afforded nuclear power in the past, it will make a significant contribution by the end of the century.

Conservation offers more immediate promise. Yergin has gathered statistics showing how several corporations made deep cuts in their use of energy in the last decade, and did so with little new investment of capital. Dow Chemical, one of the most voracious energy consumers in the country, reduced its consumption by 40 percent in 10 years. One Lockheed plant cut back 59 percent in five years. Yergin also mentions research done by the Environmental Studies Center at Princeton, which found that with a modest investment in insulation, the use of energy for home space heating in Twin Rivers, New Jersey, was cut by 67 percent. These figures suggest that if only our leaders could work up the nerve for it, we could develop a share-the-wealth program, cutting back where the system is fat to make more energy available to those who desperately need it.

If a panic like the one caused by the gasoline lines this summer returns, policymakers will feel the impulse to stampede, and they will probably head for whatever looks familiar, safe, and certain. The trouble is that in the energy business, there are no certainties and what appears familiar may not be safe at all. Seen in this context, the Harvard report does not propose a panacea, but recommends that we keep open as many options as possible. Investing in conservation and solar power now can make us less dependent on those familiar-looking technologies (including oil) which may lead us to a dead end in the 1980s.

Eliot Marshall

Eliot Marshall is a reporter for *Science* magazine.

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Japan as No. 1: Lessons for America
by Ezra F. Vogel

(Harvard University Press; $12.50)

The Japanese Challenge: The Success and Failure of Economic Success
by Herman Kahn and Thomas Pepper

(Thomas Y. Crowell; $10)

During the past two years the soaring American trade deficit with Japan and mounting popular and congressional irritations over our trade relations with that country have grown into an international problem of major proportions, which could presage a turn in world affairs back toward protectionism and ultimately economic disaster. Under these circumstances, books on Japan with such provocative titles as these will undoubtedly draw considerable attention. This is all the more true since the authors are eminent authorities. Ezra Vogel has long been a leading sociological scholar on Japan and Herman Kahn, the weighty pundit of the Hudson Institute, is the man who, in his *The Emerging Japanese Superstate: Challenge and Response* (1970), set off a still-growing scholarly boom by describing Japan as the rising economic giant of the world.

Neither book directly addresses the central trade problem between the United States and Japan; they treat it only peripherally, and perhaps this is just as well. The trade issue is as fast-moving as it is complex. It changes with monthly trade statistics, the shifting moods of American politics, almost continual bilateral negotiations, and constant Japanese domestic political maneuverings. Instead of the trade issue, Vogel concentrates on some of the most obvious successes of Japanese society and economy; he suggests that we Americans, who unquestionably are falling behind the Japanese on many fronts, should look seriously at their model of modernity to see what we might usefully learn from it. Kahn and his colleague, Thomas Pepper (whose name appears in much smaller type on the dust jacket), admit that Japan has done less well than Kahn predicted in his earlier book, and they concentrate on a plan for its return to more rapid economic growth. While Vogel's book is clearly addressed to the American public, Kahn's seems more aimed at the Japanese. In fact, a somewhat different version of it did appear in Japanese last October under a title which might be freely translated "Despite All This Japan Can Grow: Recommendations for Overcoming Pessimism." In style the English edition falls halfway between a political tract and an economic analysis best left in Xeroxed research memorandum form.

Kahn outlines his argument by considering several possible directions the Japanese economy might take between now and the year 2000. Ruling out a return to traditional austerity, he argues that a drift toward a "welfare-consumer-leisure-oriented" society is inevitable and deplores the slowness with which the Japanese have invested in adequate housing and a better road network. He fulminates against the antigrowth sentiments that have been popular in Japan during the past decades. He believes that even the current "business-as-usual" approach will lead to greater trouble; he sees it as attempting to overcome the surplus capacity Japanese industry built up in the heady days of fast industrial growth through mild Keynesian deficit spending and cautious case-by-case pragmatism. This will not adequately meet the expectations of the Japanese people or sop up enough of Japan's overproduction to lessen the frictions caused by excessive exports. Such conditions, he fears, could lead to severe foreign pressures on Japanese trade and a nasty "nationalistic-xenophobic" reaction in Japan.

The best way to avoid these dangers would be a daring government-led push for a quick return to fast growth of around nine or 10 percent, produced initially by massive deficit spending. This Kahn calls the *Yonzensō* program, the "fourth plan," which he contrasts with the present "Third National Comprehensive Development Plan" adopted in 1977 (the *Sanzensō* program). Just how this *Yonzensō* plan would work is not at all clear to this non-economist reviewer. It seems to call for even greater productive capacity, and it implies massive deficit spending. This would seem inevitably inflationary, now that "Japanese public debt relative to GNP," in strong contrast to the 1960s, exceeds that of the United States, though Kahn stoutly argues to the contrary. The plan would also demand a further postponement of investment in the sound social infrastructure which Kahn elsewhere condemns as having been a great mistake.

Kahn maintains that his *Yonzensō* program would lead Japan toward a beautiful "postindustrial marriage of machine and garden." In the Japanese case, since there is no flat land left for more "gardens," Kahn envisions a greater use of hillsides. Obviously he has not hiked the hundreds of miles I have through Japanese "hillsides," which are not the rolling hills of New York or parts of California but precipitous and rugged terrain indeed.

All in all Kahn's program is not very convincing. Though condemning the old Japanese "religion" of industrial growth at any price, he himself sounds like its last true believer. His whole plan seems to be only a variant of Tanaka's ill-timed "restructuring of the Japanese archipelago," which ran afoul of pollution and crowding problems and then the energy crunch. I for one am happy that Japan's economic future is not in Kahn's hands but in those of more cautious and pragmatic Japanese politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen, who seem to be handling the Japanese economy quite ably, while keeping Japanese society and politics on an extraordinarily even keel.

Vogel's book is entirely different and makes for much more lively and worthwhile reading, at least for Americans. It might be faulted on several scores. For example, Vogel quite frankly overlooks or minimizes Japanese problems and shortcomings, but he does this purposely in order to emphasize the points on which they excel and on which we might try to emulate them. There can be no doubt that, as an industrial economy and urbanized society, the Japanese surpass us in many ways and that we are steadily falling behind them. This idea may be shocking to most Americans and infuriating to some. Old assumptions of Western and especially American superiority, as well as simple racial prejudices, do not die easily. But Vogel has something important to tell Americans. The question is whether they will have the patience and openness of mind to listen.

Part Two of Vogel's three-part book, accounting for four-fifths of its total length, is entitled "Japanese Successes."

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A listing of the contents of its chapters will give a general idea of the areas he covers, areas in which we have something to learn from the Japanese. In different sequence, they are: basic education, the pursuit of knowledge, the balance between bureaucratic guidance and private business initiative in national economic policy, group solidarity, consensus, and the concept of fair shares in running the economy, Japan's different but efficient welfare system, and the extraordinarily low levels of crime in contemporary Japan.

One might have wished for comments on other areas of Japanese society from so broadly knowledgeable a scholar. Even though two of the chapters are labeled "The State" and "Politics," they fail to cover these subjects adequately, overemphasizing the role of the bureaucracy and saying little or nothing about the basic political process of parties, elections, and parliamentary maneuvers. Since Vogel is fundamentally a sociologist, one would have hoped for something about social organization, psychological traits, and how the whole complex industrialized society of Japan fits so smoothly and efficiently together. But perhaps he is saving this for some future *magnum opus*.

We should not complain, for Vogel offers us one of the most challenging books of the year. No American can doubt that our nation faces serious problems in many fields. Absorbed in our sense of uniqueness (a criticism we so readily level at the Japanese), most of us have given no thought to learning from others, especially the Japanese, about how to handle these problems. The shocking discrepancies between us and them in crime and in pre-college schooling alone should shake us into some awareness of this need. I suspect, however, that the businessman's envy of Japanese economic efficiency is more likely to produce the first results, and it is on this that Vogel lays his main emphasis.

It will be said by some that the author fails to provide what should have been the second half of his book: specific lessons Americans should learn from Japan. Instead Vogel outlines some obvious criticisms that will be raised against the whole concept and then answers these objections, but he does not specifically tell us what can be learned and how.

Americans obviously are not Japanese. We lack their homogeneity; we are wedded to our loose and ponderous 18th-century system of local autonomies; we are inordinantly proud of and hopelessly addicted to our Byzantinely complex and inefficient legal system; most important of all, we as a people simply would not tolerate the less individualistic, more group-oriented society that lies at the heart of the whole Japanese system. A deeper analysis of this last problem by Vogel, the sociologist, would have been helpful. However, as he points out, the late feudal Japanese of the 19th century were most certainly not Americans or Europeans, and yet they proved capable of learning from the West a great deal more than we are likely to learn from them now. If we are so lacking in imagination as to be unable to make any use of their experience and skills, we deserve to fall further behind.

Edwin O. Reischauer

Edwin O. Reischauer, former ambassador to Japan, is the author of *The Japanese* (Harvard University Press, Belknap Press).

The Duke of Deception: Memories of My Father by Geoffrey Wolff

(Random House; $12.95)

Arthur Wolff did not boast about his life, which by any account was extraordinary. Still, if pressed, he might tell you what he told his son: that he had gone to Groton and from there to Yale; that at Yale he had been picked for "Bones," a secret society whose members eventually condescend to run the world; that during the war he had done dashing things, been a fighter pilot in the RAF, a guerrilla in Yugoslavia, and a sapper with the French resistance. Arthur Wolff's resumé listed a degree in aeronautical engineering from the Sorbonne, Paris, France; and for 15 years during the era of the cost-plus defense contract, he worked as an aeronautical engineer for the leading American aircraft manufacturers. Arthur Saunders Wolff III was an Anglican; his mother, he told his son, was a Van Zandt, a fine old Dutch name.

None of this was true; Arthur Wolff was a confidence man. He had *applied* to Groton, but had been rejected, and thereafter had been dismissed from one private school after another. He never finished college, which anyway had been the University of Miami, not Yale, and his employers should have known that the Sorbonne did not give degrees in science, much less in aeronautical engineering. Arthur Wolff was not in the service: the Navy turned him down because he stammered, the Army because of his bad eyes. Nor was he an engineer, or an Anglican. He was, however, a Jew.

His son, a novelist and critic, says that his father "would not make peace with his actualities, and so he was the author of his own circumstances." And how can this fail to remind us of Jay Gatsby? "Sprung from some platonic conception of himself," he too was the author of his own circumstances; he too boasted of brummagem degrees; he too claimed to be a war hero; and, like Arthur Samuels Wolff, he too did not use his real name, which was Gatz. Gatsby's life was riddled with self-inflicted suffering, but there was also something gorgeous about it, just as there was something gorgeous about the life ofArthur Wolff (who liked *The Great Gatsby*, but "identified with Nick Carraway!"). It was a life the literary imagination responds to one built wholly on style, the artfu manipulation of appearances; and, like Gatsby's, it has inspired an elegan literary monument.

Arthur Wolff was not born a mountebank; he became one under th loveless tutelage of his father, Dr Samuel Wolff. "The Doctor," as he wa called in Hartford, where he was prominent figure, was 52 when his so was born; thereafter he was too old an too absorbed in his work to spend tim with the boy. Instead The Docto heaped things on him, "took love shortcut through stuff." It's a familia

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story now, but it shakes the verities of one's nostalgia to see it being played out in the early 1900s, when Arthur grew up. Bright and charming, Arthur was popular with his friends and schoolmates, who called him Duke. But his charm did not impress his father, and so from an early age Arthur had to dissemble. "Because he exhibited none of the superiority so precious to The Doctor, he pretended to it." Unhappily, he would never have a worse audience.

By the time Arthur was 16 he had been sent down from nearly every second-rate prep school in New England; he had, however, learned about girls, clothes, and the uses of pretension; and this knowledge he would exploit skillfully for the rest of his life. Geoffrey Wolff remembers his father's cache of "gentleman's accessories"; things made of soft wool, leather, silk, and burnished metal: nice, expensive things. Arthur Wolff took them "seriously." Perhaps they were a way of shoring up his pretensions: the gentleman's accessories for the gentleman. Or perhaps they were his way of holding onto his father, who had loved in "things." Looking down the causality of Arthur's life, Geoffrey Wolff wants "to beg that monster of rectitude. . . . Ease up a little, old man." He never did; perhaps he couldn't.

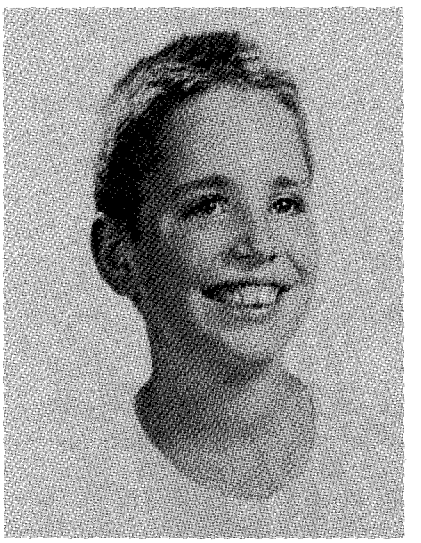
Here is The Doctor at his whining worst, writing to Arthur's headmaster:

This whole thing greatly mortifies me, and to be in a position such as this is very painful, for I assure you I do not deserve it, and it seems I have no shelter to which I can apply for comfort. . . .

This troubles you, however, and I should not pour out my soul to such a busy man as you are, and you will forgive this outcry against the pain my wounds are causing me.

'Me," "my wounds," "no shelter to which I can apply for comfort"—what is his but the patent sign of a "lacerating self-pity from which my father could have no possibility of appeal"? And what had Arthur done to prompt this wail of grief? He had borrowed a car, he had met some girls at a hotel, an offense so grave that even his mother, who ordinarily indulged him, was moved to lamentation. "I cannot bring myself to say Dear Arthur," her letter begins, and ends, "Your Mother, alas." I wish Geoffrey Wolff had made more of an effort to understand The Doctor's side, for he does come off as the one unmitigated "monster" in a book full of delicate moral portraiture. Still I can understand why his lambent imagination would go dark at The Doctor, whose wounds, however severe, were nothing next to those he inflicted on his son.

Arthur Wolff in 1944.



Geoffrey in fourth grade, 1947. Photos from *The Duke of Deception.*

But remarkably, Arthur Wolff did not pass the sting along. His marriage was stormy (not altogether through his fault: like The Doctor, his wife did not love him); his professional life was one long performance; he would often disappear for weeks at a time; nonetheless, he was a good father to *his* son.

I listened in mute terror as my father lifted my torts against him, real and fancied. But I listened, too, when he called me the best, brightest, most loving, most loved, apple of his eye, pride of his life, one to whom all things were open. I wonder if The Doctor ever said healing words to his patient, his son?

There is Arthur Wolff's real triumph, not that he was able to bedizen his way past personnel officers and headwaiters, but that he did not pass the sting along. Yes, he lied to his son, and his public lies forced his family to move—no, to flee—from one corner of the country to another, just one step ahead of the sheriff, 20 homes in eight years, until his wife could bear their fugitive life no more. And yes, the Duke of Deception was a snob, a bad citizen, a bad character all around; and Geoffrey Wolff is right not to romanticize his shabby career or to downplay the damage Arthur did to him. But he also says this wholly justifying thing about his father: "I had this from him always: compassion, care, generosity, endurance." Arthur Wolff died alone, in a drabby California rooming house, but before he died he paid for his deceptions—in jail sentences, in public disgrace, in family rejection. This book is a reward for his love, and it is a lucid, loving, and stylish performance.

Jack Beatty

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The Novelists

Thomas McGuane: Heroes in "Hotcakesland"

When the alluvial chunk of time known as the "late 1960s/early 1970s" is embellished with chronological endpoints, the first three novels of Thomas McGuane—*The Sporting Club* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 1968), *The Bushwacked Piano* (Simon and Schuster; 1971), *Ninety-Two in the Shade* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 1973)—will fit easily into the newly defined period as registers of a singular state of mind. His books were believed by his acolytes to corroborate certain deeply held beliefs of the time which responsible people usually found antithetical to the health of the nation—the idea that there is no future, for instance. Friends bestowed a McGuane novel upon an initiate sporting smiles similar to the ones on the faces of those introducing a new drug. Like the unique characters he casts as heroes, McGuane was infamous.

McGuane's heroes are forever being thwarted by those who always prevail in the nation he calls "Hotcakesland": the little Nixons, cheaters lacking wit and charm, people who like money, and men with guns. The McGuane hero is discernible from other modern picaros—from the beat generation roadrunners bucking the existential formula, for instance—partly in that he is picky about the nature of the ineluctable thing he seeks. He is driving hard after some lost primeval virtue, trying to remember what Faulkner would have said he never even knew. For these young men, the overriding virtues are the old ones, the culled bits of frontier ethic and inviolate wilderness verities that used to define American manhood. None of them would be caught dead in a "relevant" university course.

"Memory," announces Chet Hunnicutt, a man who has none, in McGuane's new novel, *Panama* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $7.95), "is the only thing that keeps us from being murderers." It is this elusive quest for memory which keeps the heroes moving, occasionally toward the dangerous kinds of men and situations which are the bastions of the old things in these times. The hardest fish to catch in the waters Thomas Skelton travels off the Florida coast in the third novel, *Ninety-Two in the Shade*, is the ancient giant pompano, the permit. After a lucky beginner hooks one of the big fish, Skelton reflects on the irony of coming close to the old truisms in the company of an upstanding specimen from "Hotcakesland":

> *A fish that was exactly noble, thought Skelton, who began to imagine the permit coming out of a deep water wreck by the pull of moon and tide, riding the invisible crest of the incoming water, feeding and moving by force of blood, only to run afoul of an asshole from Connecticut.*

McGuane's attitude toward his scrappy, eternally pained heroes lies somewhere between A. E. Housman's often sloppy romanticism and the vicious viewpoint of Housman's parodists ("What, still alive at 22," the best of them once jibed, "A fine upstanding man like you?"). His heroes are high-born renderings of the young people known in the late Vietnam War America as "the kids"; they are members of the generation upon whom centered a brief liberal political sentiment toward children who didn't want to die. The heroes are white boys of mildly mangled mind who labor under all the problems of toughness and manhood suffered by Hemingway's white boys and suffer all the tugging of primordial heartstrings of Faulkner's white boys, only to be thrown among the philistines of modern Hotcakesland. All they can hope for is enough disdain to rise above it, and all they can do is howl or die.

As our heroes careen through the hinterlands in search of the kind of America young men used to grow up with, fending off the constant interventions of solid citizens, they ski the high ridge of madness. Here is the salient characteristic of the McGuane man: the sheer romanticization of a lunacy verging on mild sociopathy and the contention that the observation of the secret beauty of one's impending madness is almost worth the pain. Vernon Stanton and James Quinn of *The Sporting Club*, Nicholas Payne of *The Bushwacked Piano*, Thomas Skelton of *Ninety-Two in the Shade*, and even Chet Hunnicutt of *Panama* are heroes tied to their time by a common weakness: extreme unacceptability. Not one of them, as a citizen, is "in the least solid." They walk among the other mortals only, as Thomas Skelton's mother puts it in *Ninety-Two in the Shade*, as "figments of their own imaginations," as men who, she contends, "are convinced that you arrive at the right thing by eliminating all the wrong ones." Thus they move toward obscure showdowns. Thomas Skelton decides in *Ninety-Two in the Shade* to cling to the one thing in his life he believes he can do well, being a fishing guide in Florida. It is the one choice he could have made which leads to his death.

Nicholas Payne decides that his "readjustment" to a normal life will come through partnership with a double-amputee con-man who sells towers loaded with insect-devouring bats. He thinks that as a result of this fine tuning "his life would be reconstituted, like frozen orange juice. . . . He would become a legend." But Payne, as his girlfriend notes upon reflection, is a young man who is not well:

> *Nothing happened she couldn't outgrow, but what bothered a little—sometimes—was that Nicholas through some total romantic frangibility didn't have quite the same resilience. His emotional losses had a way of turning out to be real ones. It was like in books and made her jealous. . . .*

Thomas Skelton remembers "in his childhood, his father explaining to him that he lived in a civilization that was founded from its family life to its government on the principle that the wheel that squeaks the loudest gets the grease." Here is the romantic modern lesson of McGuane and his boys. Don't ever calm down. Don't accept it for a moment. Cathartic moments come less from the resolution of problems than from the protagonist's mad inability to deal with everything that's hurt him: he either begins to giggle, bark like a dog, light out, or pronounce some brilliant benediction upon the nature of his complaint. The motif is the classic "We're not gonna take it" of radical 1960s songs, set out in a beat palatable to any reader who had come to realize that you "take it" in one large gulp—you get your MBA—or you opt for lunacy. These men could only be heroes during a time in which dilettantism seemed the sole moral course.

Considered together, McGuane's four novels fall easily into one trilogy and an epilogue—each novel taking its hero further from both the wormy heart of America and the thing he needs to find there. The progression begins with *The Sporting Club*, a tale of two boyhood friends exploring atavistic ideas of dependence and domination in an archetypal outdoorsman's battlefield in Michigan.

Next is the pain of Nicholas Payne in *The Bushwacked Piano*. A former devotee of

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The midday rattling of the cicada
above me, coming from which tree?
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beside the house.
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these front steps are split
and need cementing.
I have been here minutes
and now see a slew of caterpillars
twisting on the waled doormat
toward the black rubber nibs
which spell WELCOME.
A calico cat zigzags after moths
in the uncut grass, paws one down
and tamps it on the matted grass
beneath the birch. Bit by bit
the day is made of this,
and day after day.

David Pollens

what his father calls "the Rand McNally approach to self-discovery," Payne pursues his formless quests in some of the funniest prose available. The best Payne can do for himself by the end, devoid of the woman he'd suffered for, his partner and only friend, is be once again, "at large."

This trilogy ends auspiciously with the walking death of Tom Skelton in *Ninety-Two in the Shade* (the novel that won McGuane a nomination for the National Book Award). It is Skelton who gives up on his attempts to control madness right at the beginning and rides amid the old nobilities quite high on the realization that someone is going to kill him.

With the arrival of *Panama*, a lesser novel than its predecessors, the McGuane hero nears a logical conclusion. Though Chet Hunnicutt occasionally retains the McGuane hero characteristics ("185 pounds of strangely articulate misfit"), he'd just as soon forget about it—which isn't difficult to do—because Chet has lost the one thing that allows enlightened madness to be worth the trouble, his memory. "Your brain is decomposing," his ex-girlfriend tells him, "I can smell it from here."

Chet is an ex-rock star and thus an ex-religious figure retired without benefits such as fully functioning faculties. He once evacuated himself from the lower end of a dead elephant on stage:

I was making a tremendous living demonstrating with the aplomb of a Fuller Brush salesman, all the nightmares, all the loathsome toppling states of mind, all the evil that goes on behind closed eyes. When I crawled out of the elephant's ass, it was widely felt I'd gone too far, and when I puked on the mayor, that was it, I was through. I went home to Key West and voted for Carter.

The 1970s (necessarily distinguished here from both the late 1960s/early 1970s and the 1960s) have put Chet Hunnicutt over the edge, but American Gothics still come all the way from Hotcakesland to accost him. Chet spots them with a telephoto eye one day while sailing:

He was wearing a football jersey over long nylon surfing trunks and she wore a homemade bikini knotted on her brown rectalineal hips. What healthy people! They had formed a couple and rented a sailboat. They had clean shy smiles and though they may not have known their asses from a hole in the ground in terms of a personal philosophy, they seemed better off for it, happier, even readier for life and death than me with my ceremonious hours of thought and unparalleled acceleration of experience. . . .

The young couple turn out to be cocaine merchants in the process of setting poor Hunnicutt up. But it doesn't matter. The thrilling truths underlying Thomas Skelton's world of incipient death are long forgotten. Nobody cares in *Panama*—even if you have been a "national disgrace"—if you, as Chet does, nail yourself to doors or sniff cocaine off the sidewalks in the middle of town.

One of the gorgeous symmetries of McGuane's trilogy is that the trained reader can pick out the dangerous characters, unfaithful women, men low enough to sneak up from behind, and even the executioners, if he knows how to read their clothes and last names. But it doesn't work in *Panama*. There isn't even real pain because the characters can't ever get close enough to one another to inflict anything—a noble or ignoble death included. No one worries about old verities because they have been forgotten. Somehow even the prose lacks the wondrous connective tissue that usually spans the interstices between the patented McGuane outbursts. *Panama* is a sadly bitter book about what became of the alternative American dream.

Though McGuane's version of the genre literature of young, sensitive, brilliant, but tormented aristocratic white boys is among the best written since the 1920s, there is some fundamental aspect of great literature missing in his work. Critics have said McGuane doesn't care enough. A friend who welcomed McGuane's work as God's writ six years ago, recently noted, in a rather coarse bit of analysis, that McGuane's books are about "cunt and death" while Tolstoy's, for instance, are about "love and mortality." Even the beautiful Anne Fitzgerald in *The Bushwacked Piano* looked at her raging boyfriend and thought: "It reminded her of the way people went crazy on TV as opposed to Dostoyevsky." But if McGuane found the kinds of truths in his splintered times that preoccupied the great Russians, then his wonderful heroes could not have entertained such fine madness as they searched for those truths amid the wreckage.

Donald R. Katz

Donald R. Katz is a New York writer.

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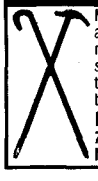

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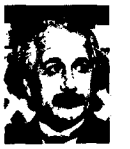

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THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE

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Washington Diarist

High Repute

Rebels are in high repute these days. Why shouldn't they be? It's on rebels that the world depends to rid itself of brutal types like Anastasio Somoza, something that gentle reformers and other counselors of forbearance don't seem able to accomplish. Yet the presumptions of the rebel-in-arms often doom his revolutionary achievement. At least one former Sandinista, who has moved on to fight the Guatemalan struggle, has had success go to his head. He told an American journalist that "life is different for the rebel. We give it easier, we take it easier." Taking life and risking life is something rebels *do* do, at once casually and conscientiously. But they certainly don't give life, however much they feel revolution to be an act of creation. Of course, they do give hope. In our day, however, the hopes that revolutions offer tend to be short-lived. It's possible that the Sandinistas will avoid the fate of revolutions to devour not only their enemies but also their own. There is one sure comfort for us already: while America may bear much of the responsibility for what happened to and in Nicaragua in the past, what happens in the future will be neither to our blame nor to our credit. That alone makes the revolution momentous.

Bertolt Brecht left the US shortly after his involuntary appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Would he live, his friends wondered, in West Germany or East Germany? He choose communism, presumably out of conviction. But he felt obliged to explain why: "I was like the doctor with two syphilitic patients, the insatiable old lecher and the pregnant young prostitute. I had penicillin enough only for one of them." How willfully naive that sounds now. And how arrogant. Are left-wing dictatorships really pregnant with hope? Or do they have the stamp of finality on them? Orwell, thinking about them, told us to "think of a boot stamping on a human face forever."

"Philosopher of freedom" is what the newspaper obituaries called my old teacher Herbert Marcuse when he died on a visit to Germany (West) at 81 earlier this month. He did seek freedom, coming here as a refugee from nazism and staying here long after he taught that America was repressive, even unto its tolerance. In recent years he lived in southern California—but spent much of his time comfortably in Germany where he was sure fascism was alive again. With others out of the Frankfurt school of critical theory, Marcuse aimed at the unification of Marxian and Freudian thought. Rising above the two mutually proscriptive dogmas, he seemed heroic in stature. He certainly was that physically—tall, angular, leonine, stentorian in voice and demeanor. For a brief moment he occupied the stage at history's periphery. He wanted more, but was grateful for what he got. The critic of celebrity became a celebrity, known not for his important exegesis of Hegel (*Reason and Revolution*) but for his tutorial role to Angela Davis, winner last week of the Lenin Peace Prize.

His most famous acolyte became a luminary of the old left, though he was known as father of the new left. His books—important books, by the way, and particularly *Eros and Civilization*—were the secret books of the movement, so secret doubtless that they were rarely read. Even he must have known that they were not understood. But he shared much with the new left: what comes most vividly to mind is his contempt and abuse of intellectual adversaries. He called the *New Leader* the *New Führer*; a then young scholar in international relations at Harvard, Dr. Ass-Kissinger. What he seemed to hold most against Hannah Arendt was her sagging bosoms. I took his course on the history of political theory. No Englishman made the reading list, neither Hobbes nor Locke nor Burke. Marcuse was not tolerant of differences.

When I and another former Brandeis student, an authentic and decent socialist, wrote our colleagues urging them not to vote for the aforementioned Ms. Davis as president of the alumni association, pointing out that she was exploiting a fragile educational institution for (unsavory) political ends, Marcuse cut us both off. He had once told an interviewer that an essay I did for the *Yale Review* was the best exposition of his views. Now I'd become a "police intellectual." There were gathered one night at a party in his Newton home a cohort of left intellectuals, many of whom had served in the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS). In my then innocence, I seemed surprised, on which surprise Marcuse commented, "Not for nothing were we known as the Office of Stalin's Stooges." He was, of course, not a stooge of Stalin. Official Marxism discomforted him. Revolutions, in fact, made him uneasy. Born to the Jewish upper bourgeoisie, he was too self-consciously elegant and felt much too superior to be affected by the degradations of the masses, or even, really, by their hopes. When Budapest rose against the tanks of the Red Army, he denounced the revolution and those whose ardors it engaged. He did not praise the Soviet Union or quite defend it. What he did was tell jokes, the kind of nervous jokes told by people who feel cheated by history, ugly jokes.

I've had Nicholas von Hoffman's piece "Children: Our Most Precious Resource" (*TNR*, June 30) on my mind all summer. It's been kept there by letters from readers and whatever kind of conscience an editor can retain in these conscience-dazing days. Meant as a Swiftian proposal, the article was intended to contrast all of the high-minded and mostly insincere official blather about children with the way millions of children are actually treated in the world. How many thousands of children—to say nothing of adults—drowned in the waters of South Asia because of action and inaction by various governments while those same governments were pledging their damnedest to the kids? Need one say more? Still, in an age of enormity, a Swiftian proposal offends and offends deeply. It is too close to truth, which is to say too close for humor.

What children really need, beyond food and clothing and education and medical care, is respect. This, too, may sound like just so much high-minded blather. But societies that don't respect their children—that abuse them and exploit them—are agressive and warlike societies. There is some corollary between the relative impoverishment of a society and the disrespect it shows its children. However unfashionable a subject in academe, national character is a reality. Some cultures respect children more than others; those that do are life affirming. But there are life-negating cultures and life-negating modes of thought too. Life-affirming and life-negating—that's one of the fundamental dichotomies in the world, beyond north and south, west and east, capitalist and communist. It's also one of the intractables, which shouldn't mean that it's not worth thinking about.

M.I

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We asked Americans:

'How Soon Can America Run on Solar Energy?'

Because Union Carbide's business depends on energy, our future growth depends on national policies which bring about reliable, long-term energy supplies from many sources, including solar. Since public attitudes help shape public policies, we commissioned a survey which included this question:

"Would you say that solar energy would actually supply major amounts of energy within the next five years for the following items? Within the next ten years?"

	Five Years Yes	Ten Years Yes
Heating and cooling private homes, apartment houses, office buildings and the like	57%	79%
Meeting the energy needs of factories	42%	67%
Providing power for cars	24%	45%

Source: May 1979 national probability sample, by telephone, of 1,000 adults. Conducted for Union Carbide by Roger Seasonwein Associates, Inc. ("Don't knows" not shown.)

Most Americans think we will be relying heavily on solar by the 1980's.

With the price of conventional energy sources increasing and their supply uncertain, most people want America to rely more heavily on solar energy. Solar has a bright place in the nation's energy future because it offers a relatively clean, safe alternative to dwindling supplies of oil and natural gas. But how realistic are the public's expectations of how *soon* solar will be a major factor in the nation's energy picture?

Solar energy may still be 20 years away.

The goal of President Carter's recently proposed solar program is for 20 percent of the nation's energy to come from solar sources *by the year 2000*. Other analyses also place solar's contribution in this range—also by the year 2000. And while 79 percent of those questioned in our survey expect solar to supply major amounts of energy for heating and cooling within ten years, only 21 percent of the homeowners in the poll consider themselves highly likely to replace their present systems with solar units within this period.

Why does solar seem so imminent in the abstract and so distant in practical reality? At least part of the reason for its distance is cost. A photovoltaic system capable of supplying the electricity needs of a typical home directly from sunlight currently costs about $80,000, according to some sources—more than 20 percent higher than the median sales price of houses themselves in the spring of this year. And solar collection panels and other devices for space and water heating often offer only modest fuel cost savings relative to their installation costs.

Solar's real contribution may not come until new solar technologies bring its costs down and market pressures bring the cost of conventional energy sources up. Clearly we have a long way to go before the curves cross.

How do we get there from here?

A 1978 study by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment found that the best way to stimulate the development of solar technologies would be to remove price controls and other subsidies on conventional energy sources. Union Carbide agrees that such policies would provide a big boost for alternative energy technologies for the future—and provide the incentives for conservation and development of domestic oil and gas needed for the present.

Union Carbide believes that solar will play an important role in America's energy future, even if that contribution is further into the future than most of us would like to think. A silicon material we've developed under a contract with the Department of Energy, for example, will eventually help lower the cost of photovoltaic cells.

But as a company involved in this aspect of solar development, we realize that the economics and technologies that make solar energy practical are still some years away. Union Carbide believes that the President's decontrol of domestic crude oil prices and proposals to accelerate the development of solar technologies are major steps in speeding the growth of solar's contribution to the nation's energy needs.

This advertisement is part of a continuing series on public opinion and national concerns.

For more information, write for a complimentary copy of the national survey, "Public Attitudes on Energy." Address: Energy, Union Carbide Corporation, Box G-18, 270 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

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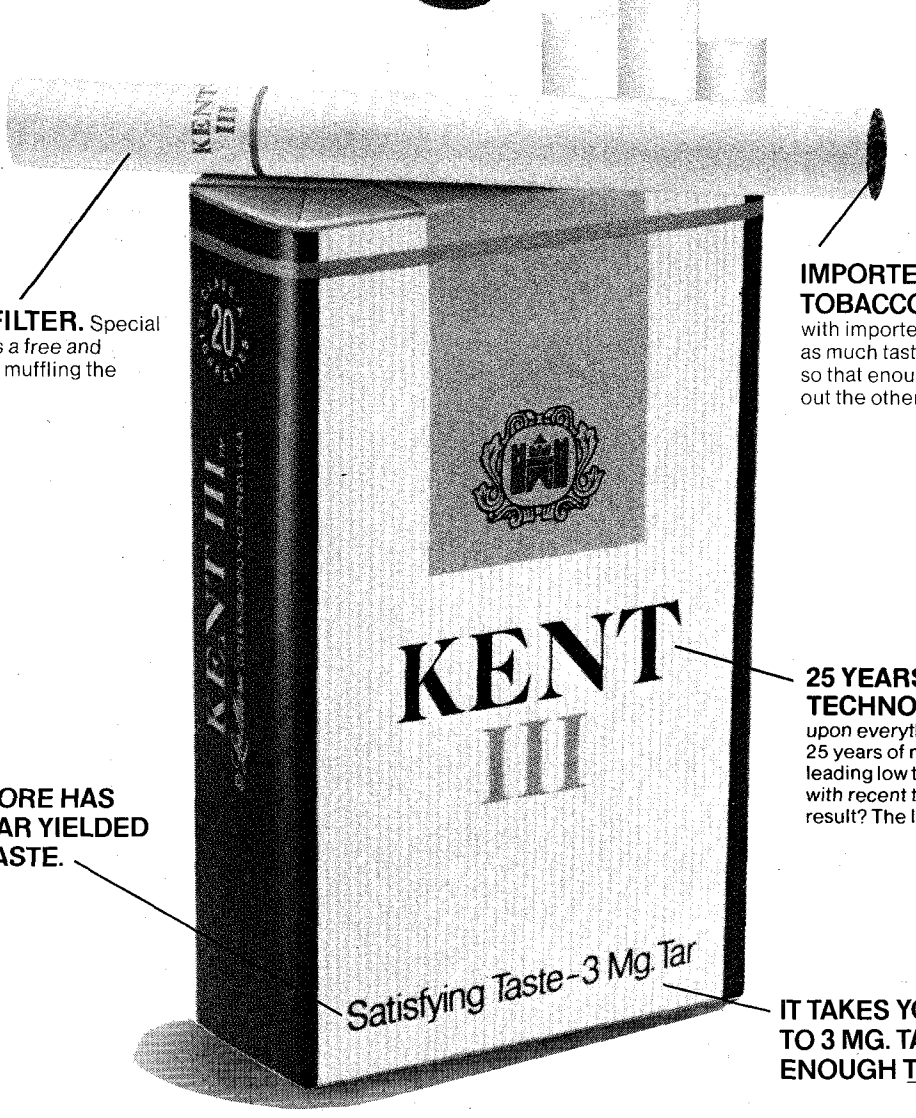

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